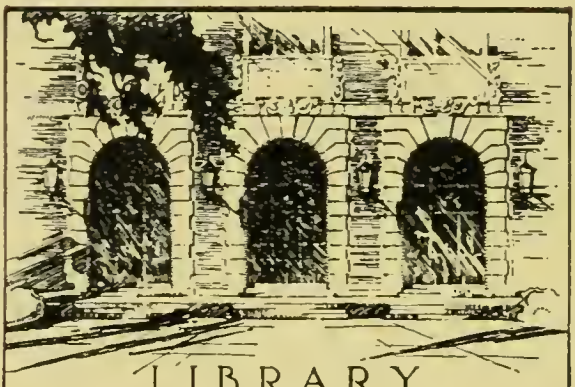
Eliza Giffard

Verquis Flintshire



LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS

823
H743m
v.3

THE

MISERIES OF AN HEIRESS.

A NOVEL.

Lane, Darling, and Co. Leadenhall-Street.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2010 with funding from
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

http://www.archive.org/details/miseriesofheires03hols

Eliza Gifford, Verquis Flintshire

THE

MISERIES OF AN HEIRESS.

A NOVEL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY

ANTHONY FREDERICK HOLSTEIN,

AUTHOR OF

SIR OWEN GLENDOWR; THE ASSASSIN OF ST. GLENROY; LOVE, MYSTERY, AND MISERY, &c.

I boast no tale in magic wonders rife;
But yet familiar, is there nought to prize,
O, Nature! in thy bosom-scenes of life?

CAMPBELL.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

PRINTED AT THE

Minerva-Press,

FOR A. K. NEWMAN AND CO.

(Successors to Lane, Newman, and Co.)

LEADENHALL-STREET,

1810.

THE

MISERIES OF AN HEIRESS.

CHAP. I.

Him no soft thoughts could move———
To gold he fled from beauty and from love!

DRYDEN.

My scenes, though feign'd, from real life I draw.

HORACE.

A Fact, or a modern Wager.

THAT during the toilette of the successive day, the thoughts of Zitella should revert to the amusement of the preceding evening, it is natural to suppose; and perhaps equally so, that the inference of the old soldier, in regard to a mercenary candidate for her hand, who "*wagered*" on

her affections, should not be lost in forgetfulness.

Irwin, her yet retained country Abigail, was busied in arranging her lady's trinkets in their proper cases, when she suddenly exclaimed, after evident thoughtfulness—"Pray, my Lady, can a gentleman betray private conversation, without disgracing himself?"

"That is a very curious question from you, Irwin," returned Zitella, smiling; "pray, to whom do you allude?"

"Why, my Lady," she replied, twisting, with great velocity, a white satin ribbon, which had lain upon the table, round her fingers, "your Ladyship knows that I am near becoming the wife of Mr. Burrows, and it is about him that I would wish to speak."

"He is one of the gentlemen to whom you allude then, I conclude?"

"No, my Lady, no; I did not, indeed, mean to call him so; but he is a very honourable man, though he is but a butler; and

and he would be ashamed to do any thing that would disgrace a richer or a higher man."

"That is indeed an honourable sentiment, Irwin; but I really cannot comprehend still the ground of your enquiry."

"Why, no, my Lady, I suppose not; but, suppose—suppose that Thomas Burrows should have heard a parcel of drinking men planning some bad thing, not quite so bad as murder, but almost—suppose, I say, my Lady, that such a thing had happened, is he bound, in honour and in duty, to keep it a secret, till the poor young creature," she continued, while tears started into her eyes, "should be married and undone for ever?"

"Heaven forbid!" ejaculated Zitella, with fervency; "no, Irwin, certainly he would be wanting both in duty and in feeling, if he were to preserve such a secret; he would, in that case, become quite as guilty as either of the others;

but your preface shocks me, for I am at a loss to guess your meaning."

"Why, then, my dear Lady, you are yourself the poor young creature who they have been wagering about."

"I am!" cried Zitella, in utter consternation; "wagering about me! what? who? where? when?"

"Lord, Lord!" exclaimed Irwin, bursting into tears, "I have told it all! and now what will become of me? but, indeed, I don't believe I told it, for, to my thinking, your Ladyship guessed it; but the way I came to know it was, that a large party had dined at Mr. Beechley's, where my Burrows lives, and, among the rest of the company, was Sir Edward Horton; and so, some time after dinner, some more bottles of champagne were called for, and as one of the footmen followed Burrows with them into the room, Mr. Beechley called out to the butler to send him away, and open the bottles and hand

hand them himself; and so, having done as he was ordered, and all the gentlemens' glasses filled, Mr. Neville said, says he, 'Let us understand the bet perfectly.' 'It is,' said Mr. Beechley, 'that before the return of the first spring month, Horton has wagered five thousand pounds, he will pay off the mortgage on his dipped estates with the ready gold of the country heiress.' Excuse my boldness, my Lady, because, for certain, these were the very words spoke; and then some one called out from the other end of the table, that the name should be given down in form; and so then they said it was 'Lady Zitella Herbert,' meaning you, my Lady; and then Sir Edward Horton laughed quite loud, and said he had never seen you but the evening before at Mr. Nugent's, who was his intimate friend, and housed the pigeon:—but I am afraid you will be angry with my making so bold, as to——"

"No, I am not angry," returned Zitella; "go on, my good girl, let me hear all."

"Why, there was not much more, I believe, at least Burrows dared not stay in the room to hear it, but only something about the pigeon having its golden feathers plucked by the money hawks, and that she would repent taking flight so soon from Park-lane; and then another gentleman, whom Burrows did not know, said you were beautiful, and very amiable, and a great deal in your Ladyship's favour; and Sir Edward laughed again, and said, 'hang beauty, that is thrown into the bargain;' and then Burrows left the room, and he says he does not believe they saw he was there, for they were all so engaged with drinking:—and now, my Lady, as every body talks of your going to be married to this fine gentleman, why, I thought it was a sin and a shame, that your Ladyship should be bought and sold like a race-horse, and wagered upon like a pack of cards; and so I told Burrows that he ought to tell your Ladyship about it; but he thought as it would be dishonour-

able

able to his master, with whom the bet was laid; and so at last we agreed to take your advice, without telling a word of what it was about; but as you, my Lady, have guessed it, why, you know, I have not broken my promise to Thomas Burrows, nor have I betrayed him."

"You certainly have done the honest man no mischief, my good girl; and tell him from me, that the service will not be forgotten."

Irwin soon after quitted the dressing-room of her lady, whose subsequent train of rumination will be easily imagined, without the necessity of description. She did not accompany Mrs. Nugent in the visiting round of a morning drive, and remained for nearly an hour in gloomy reflection; but at length, provoked with her own weakness, in feeling so deeply hurt by the unworthy conduct of an individual, who had fortunately never interested the softer affections of her heart, she descended to the drawing-room, and,

retracting her order for the nonadmission of visitors, sought, in the absence of society, the amusement of perusing some monthly publications which had just been placed on a table.

CHAP. II.

" A face untaught to feign ; a judging eye,
That darts severe upon a rising lie,
And strikes a blush through frontless flattery."

.....

" What has been left undone, that art could do ?"

The Web of Art annihilated.

Lady Zitella Herbert had laid down a book which she had been attentively perusing the past hour, when Sir Edward Horton called to pay his morning *devoir;* rejoiced to find her at home, and alone, he congratulated himself upon the long sought-for opportunity; and, with his usual grace

and eloquence, made her a tender of his heart and hand.

The heiress was silent; but while the Baronet's appearance evidenced the strongest emotion, he discovered, with infinite astonishment, that no similar agitation operated on the nerves of his auditor; her look was to him incomprehensible; it exhibited a mixed feeling of mortification, resentment, and contempt; she coldly bowed at each reiterated profession of affection, at each well-turned and elegant compliment; but not a syllable passed her lips, no confusion or embarrrassment her manner, as he proceeded to state his claims upon her regard, gratitude, and generosity.

"Three commanding claims indeed, Sir Edward; methinks I should build a modern temple to *Fortune*, not exactly in the antique style, for I would fain place 'gratitude, generosity, and affection,' at each separate avenue to the fane of this attractive, all-beneficent power!"

"And

"And I," he eagerly replied, receiving in one sense what she meant in another, "will be the first to worship at the shrine of my idolatry, and bless propitious 'Fortune,' who has for once renounced her bandaged insignia, and guided me successfully to the goal of happiness!"

"The most valuable gold is that which cannot yield to the stamp of the artificer without alloy, and the alloy of mine is the vein of *suspicion;* this, however, has here no room for display, since your own words, without any distrustful interpretation, have proclaimed an unvarnished truth. *Fortune* is, for once, neither blinded to her own influence, nor to the sacrifice of her devotee; but *wager* not, my good Sir, on her favours; she is fickle, inconstant, and, direful to relate, will not accept the oblation now tendered; it dissolves in vapour, and will not produce the usual omen of success, a flame!"

The Baronet looked for a moment doubtingly, at the next the colour faded

from his lips, they even trembled; but, as if by sudden effort, he struggled for self-possession, and replied—"I cannot at all comprehend your Ladyship's metaphorical language; mine, issuing from the heart, is simple and genuine; banish, then, the intruder, and reply to me, lovely Zitella, in correspondent terms."

"If my language were metaphorical, it were certainly not obscure," replied the orphan; "and I thought, indeed, that the language of Fortune would be best adapted to reach the heart of him who was her professed idolator. I am no fashionist, and therefore candidly avow, that I conceive no flattering impression of that *eclat* which might attend the Sir Edward Horton, who won his bride to gain an accompanying *bet*."

The Baronet started from his seat; rage and astonishment were almost superseded by the crimson blush of shame; he faintly articulated—"Some base assassin to my peace and honour has abused your ear,

Lady

Lady Zitella ; you appear to allude to some unintelligible matter, which, let it be what it may, seems to influence you to my destruction ; for, believe me, dearest, best of women ! when I solemnly assure you, that my unalterable affection——"

" Hold, Sir Edward ; profession, or asseveration, I will candidly tell you, are equally vain ; whether my intelligence be true or false, is best known to your own heart ; but my esteem for you, and, be assured, I never felt a warmer sentiment towards you, has received a shock, which no effort on your part can supercede. I am fully aware that I have viewed every pretender to my heart with jaundiced eyes ; but forgive me, if I say, that upon the present occasion I cannot, do not doubt ; and this being my real impression of this mortifying *pari*, you will excuse the necessity I feel, of fulfilling an engagement at this hour ;" and so saying, with rather more than usual *hauteur*, Lady Zitella, with a profound bow, left the room,

room, fully convinced that she had not injured the Baronet, in the credence she had afforded to the story of the wager, as, had any doubt remained upon her mind, the manner, and guilty countenance of her lover, had proclaimed the dread confirmation to her senses.

In fact, we must confess the story true; for long before Sir Edward Horton had seen enough of our orphan, to appreciate her perfections as they really were, he had actually formed the bet of which he had been accused, that he would, "ere the return of spring, bear off *the heiress* of Park-lane," and, by so doing, restore a considerable estate, which he had recently deeply mortgaged, to its original state; this had been betrayed by the gentleman with whom he had wagered, at a Bacchanalian revel, where Gerald Lester, whom our readers have probably recognized in the old soldier at the masquerade, formed one of the party, and Thomas Burrows had officiated as butler.

Disgusted

Disgusted by the scene of mercenary artifice the morning had presented, Zitella prepared to dress for a party to be given that evening by Miss Clairmond, at her father's house; nor will it be wondered, if a listless distaste should pervade her mind during this occupation, a listlessness that had never yet been diffused over her heart, until created by the consummate hypocrisy of Horton, who had been clad in a mantle of such attractive texture, that she now almost dreaded the appearance of elegant refinement, and expected to find, beneath every similar covert, the deformed resemblance of another Horton.

She entered the gilded house of fantastic decoration, where the affected child of romance received her numerous guests, with an almost arrogant contempt for the male world *en masse;* an almost insufferable haughtiness was unconsciously diffused with her step; and the customary dignity of her address, was now heightened into almost imperious distance.

Molesworth

Molesworth was already arrived, and, involuntarily, he quitted the place in which he was standing, to approach her as she advanced up the room; but the cold bow which returned his animated address, the proud frigidity of her air, and the listless accents of her voice, chilled the ardour of his ever warm, and somewhat impetuous bosom. He did not now forget "the heiress," for in the imagined caprice of her altered manner, in the lofty distance of her carriage, the characteristics of the child of wealth were jealously traced; his eyes lost their vivid illumination of soul, his heart painfully throbbed with the sigh of regret, that such error should connect with a being, otherwise so dangerously attractive as the magnetic Herbert.

"What a weak creature is man!" thought the reflective Clarence, as he turned from the object of his admiration: "the charms of an illumined countenance, the graces of manner, the light vivacity of conversation, and the still more potent auxiliary

of

of intellect, dazzle his judgment, and lull his reason into an enchanted slumber, from which he wakes even with regret. Happy for me, perhaps, that the spell were of short duration, and that the discovery of contemptible frivolity has unmasked the phantom of perfection, and taught my heart, that the victim of self-sufficiency, and weak caprice, is the one whose image it had expanded to receive; a little longer had the delusive impression lasted, and this heart might for ever have enclosed the fatally deceptive idol!"

But although reason bowed to the consequence of discovery, the heart could not rejoice in the circumstance, and still Molesworth lingered near the so lately captivating Herbert; but he addressed her not—he sought to study her general demeanour, by remarking more her manner to others than himself; the motive was simply a natural desire to receive a confirmation of his suspicions, that might fortify his heart against her more dazzling,

but

but less intrinsic powers of attraction; and whether his impression of the motive was correct, we leave for the determination of those who have bowed to the winged tyrant.

As he stood by her side, attentively surveying the wealthy divinity of general devotion, but with an attempt to appear engrossed by the conversation of Mrs. Nugent, who, happy to indulge her own loquacity, readily accepted his silent attention, Lady Darnford approached.

"I have been seeking your shadow in vain, my dear Lady Zitella."

"Your Ladyship does me honour; but being yet mere mortal clay, my spirit remains clad in its material habiliments."

"It was no ghostly shadow, believe me, that I sought; and although he bear a *bloody hand*, he terrifies not, since it rather serves to interest in his favour; and he calls even the heavenly powers of grace to aid his cause, addresses prayers to Venus, and invocations to the Muses, yet, verily, he is a most perturbed spirit, for he haunts thy

thy steps with dire intent, and breathes matter of import into 'the porches of thine ear," fair Lady.'

"Not to pursue the language of hyperbole, my good Countess, if I should encounter this perturbed wanderer, I would certainly hand him over to the Lord Bishop of our diocese, and request he might be silenced for ever in that sea, where the friends of my nursery days early instructed me, all such troublesome vagrants would find a permanent abode; for, positively, I feel no inclination for the society of any of this description."

"That woman is a compound of inconsistency and contrariety, is a maxim which your Ladyship seems much inclined to exemplify, or else you have discovered a new method of evincing disinclination for individual society; although, upon second thoughts, perhaps, Lady Zitella, you deem the most certain method of ridding yourself of the company of this intolerable attendant, is to convert him into a husband

band—my Lord Bishop may be bountiful, and, by handing him over to you, permit him to be taken and enchained, '*for better for worse.*"

"Pray, my Lady, throw some light on the subject, and render 'darkness visible,' that I may the better mark the shade."

"Lady Zitella seems anxious for administering full effect to the pencilling talent of the Countess, and

"From the shadow, prove the substance true,"

said the piqued Arabella Harley, suspecting the object of allusion to be one who had long ranked high in her admiration, and who now felt a jealous pang at the report in circulation, in regard to the matrimonial connexion.

"It is a happy coincidence, my good young lady," said the Darnford censurer, "that a line, dedicated to *Envy*, should be so very appropriate to express your thoughts on the present subject; but your request,

request, Zitella, is yet uncomplied with, and as no evil deeds require the covert of darkness, at least with me, I will, like a politic artist, who fears his sketch of an actor in character will not strike to the life, write beneath the pictured semblance of 'Benedict the married man,' the name of *Horton*."

"Horton, my dear Madam!" returned our orphan, while contempt for the being, and annoyance at the impression of her being the dupe of a mercenary suitor, coloured her face and neck with indignant suffusion—"Horton!" she again pronounced; "your Ladyship may *rely* there is no foundation for the idle report."

"Pardon me, Lady Zitella, and banish those angry blushes, for I must aver there is, in my opinion, in the general opinion, no very stable foundation. The ground of a curricle *tête-à-tête* was extensive, and accepted attention evidenced no proof of indifference on the part of the fair flirt; and, moreover, when a host of unfortu-

nates

nates had sighed in dolorous plight for an hour's audience, it was not very discouraging to Horton, to be the happy he who claimed general admission to the house in which the magnetic prize of beauty was deposited; Mrs. Nugent, according to her own account, played the part of a truly kind relative and friend, and did not obtrude an unseasonable portion of her society on the *lovers;* and this information, from the wife of your guardian, finally gave sterling weight to the mere currency of light coin."

"Then, my Lady, suffer me to reduce it once more to its real valueless circulation; for if such a report has crept abroad, be assured it is unauthorized by fact, and ever will be. I shall therefore feel obliged to whoever will kindly take the trouble, if it be repeated, to afford it a decisive negative, from the first authority—myself."

But the contradiction of this report, even from the *first authority,* did not tranquillize the

the heart of Molesworth, for the reflection of Lady Darnford rankled in his bosom; and he could not but, from appearance, conclude, that most reprehensible encouragement had been yielded to the man of whom Zitella, with capricious versatility, now spoke with even a coldness of indifference, if not contemptuous distance, to which public appearance gave the origin of unjustifiable *hauteur*, and unfeeling coquetry.

The reply of Lady Darnford was lost to him, for no extension of attention was given to catch her accents; Zitella alone was now the object of his scrutinizing investigation; and he remained blinded by the impression that this investigation was prompted by reason, to aid the struggle of his heart against an attachment, that, however hopeless it might appear, could not, by any effort, be repressed, while he believed the object deserving of an exalted passion.

"What is Lady Darnford about now?" said

said Mrs. Nugent, turning to Mr. Neville, "she looks so glum."

"Only waging civil war a *l'ordinaire*," was the reply.

"Mercy on us! I never heard of her doing any thing like *civil*; for Hubby says she is always taunting at people, and I can see nothing like to civil in that."

"Yes, Madam," interrupted the now stately Dowager, suddenly turning upon the unguardedly loud speaker, and, with an air of inflexible gravity, she rejoined—"I will afford you one similarity, in the crying key of our *metropolitan Pomonas*, that may not offend *your* ear, and the word of *pronounciation* shall suffer the *spell-bound* metaphor to have play; and now, with this premise, I will tender you an approximation to something "*civil*" in my composition, for I am verily like unto a *civil* orange—always bitter."

"There are bitters in the vegetation of our existence," said Molesworth, "which prove less surfeiting, less pernicious, than their

their contraries; and the severe admonisher, nay, the sarcastic reprobator, when guided by judgment and experience, is a more advantageous companion than even the flattering friend."

The eyes of the speaker glanced towards Zitella, as he articulated; for the recent reflections on her conduct, in regard to Sir Edward Horton, were vivid on his mind; and the indignant anger which mounted to the brow of our heroine, at the unjust aspersion thrown on her really guileless conduct, with the severe misinterpretation of her actions, viewed as the mere effusion of resentment for an unpleasant truism, rendered the interested lover apprehensive, lest the *flatterer* would not be preferred to her who ventured to utter the language of reproof.

Our orphan again coloured, yet she knew not why; she had oftentimes exhibited the same vivid flush, when the gaze of general admirers had annoyed and confused her; but this was a blush the

heart might have claimed as exclusively its own, and it fluttered, from an indistinct consciousness that it was so; yet why it should cause the roseate suffusion, Zitella was yet in happy ignorance.

Meanwhile the tormenting Dowager had addressed Mr. Molesworth—"You might have couched a complimentary simile better, by embracing a Shakesperian line, for, truly, you could have raised a comparison as applicable in the

> "Toad, which, ugly and venemous,
> Wears yet a precious jewel in its head."

"Well, if you choose to call yourself a toad," cried Mrs. Nugent, turning towards her, "that's no fault of mine; and I am sure I shan't contradict you, for I find you have been making fun and derision of me, but I am determined to tell why—it is only because the grapes are sour, and my Hubby liked me better, and would not therefore have you; and so you are always

pecking

pecking at me, and I did not find it out before; but now I shall be aware of your tricks, since I have heard why you bite so bitterly."

Every vestige of colour forsook the face of the Countess; her heart experienced a revolution, that destroyed, in an instant of time, the despotic government which for years had vassalaged its feelings; yet the public voice was firm, and, to the secret murmur of her heart, spoke not aloud; her air was pregnant with a cold dignity, that appearing wholly destitute of anger or resentment, seemed, to the general eyes, a rational contempt, arising from a mind of conscious supremacy over that of the illiterate Fanny, a mind that felt the man who could prefer such a rival, were indeed unworthy of herself.

Lady Darnford yet preserved silence, and her searching orbs, fixed on the imbecile beauty, perplexed and astonished, for they breathed a language elevated above her comprehension; but at length, burst-

ing into a loud unpolished laugh, she exclaimed—" What ! I've posed you at last, have I ? and you have not got so much as one word to say in your own defence !"

" Composed and composing," was the grave reply. " Composition is the fashionable term of the day for a novel species of sketching ; now I will improve upon folly, for I will draw a composition of a toad, a glow-worm, and a spider, and undertake to picture them even to the life—be patient and attend :—

" A spider, not a money spider, but one of a more capacious structure, set out on his travels, with all the presumption and self-confidence which will attend a young enterprizer in his first excursion ; he spent his allotted day in thoughtless idleness, nor profited by the advantages he might have derived from a now enlarged view of his own species : darkness at length overspread the face of that part of creation which then sheltered him ; but at this moment, his sight was caught by a glow-

worm,

worm, beautiful amid the shades of Erebus; its luminous radiance attracted him, and, with indefatigable pains, he spun a web to catch the precious treasure; he succeeded, and secured the prize. Entangled in a lasting net, the exulting spider remained a while entranced; at length, his sleepy orbs no longer could arrest their closing lids, and tranquilly he slumbered for some short space of time; but, alas! he at length awoke, and sought the glittering gem in vain, for the dawn had long since glimmered o'er the mountain's height, whence the glow-worm owed its origin of transitory life; and its brilliancy, its sole fallacious charms, its sole attraction, had, in his eyes, disappeared with the light of Reason's world; yet the poor worm remained to mock his hopes, and the memento of past folly, the web which had enslaved the grovelling produce, was now regarded with mortified regret and repentant sorrow, for time mispent, error irre-

 trievable!

trievable! A toad was by chance nigh the spider, who, descending from fabled tradition, even from the days of Shakespeare's Hecate, was a creature most notable in the incantations of supernatural agency, and could effect, in these efforts of magical skill, much beyond mere mortal power; to her, therefore, the spider applied, and besought her, by efficacious remedy, to dispel the harrowing effects of disappointment, and a disappointment so severe, as his now *mimosa* disposition was ill calculated to sustain; but the toad was cold by nature, and disinclined to exertion; the answer, however, was not slow, neither indecisive—behold it: "The famed magic virtues of my potent head, apply solely to that rational and enlightened part of the human species, *justly* denominated man, but on *ephemera*, its effect is ever lost."

"It is very extraordinary to me," said Mrs. Nugent, in a half sullen accent, "that Lady Darnford should talk such nonsense; how

how can she suppose we should ever believe her cock and a bull story about spiders, and toads, and glow-worms, conversing together? I never heard such a silly business in my life; I am sure I can't make head nor tail of it."

"And yet the time may not be far distant, when the moral will be indebted to you for its illustration," said the Dowager, and very coolly turned to converse on a foreign subject with another acquaintance.

At this moment an elderly gentleman, with rapid eagerness, approached to Molesworth, his hand was extended, with a warmth of cordiality the expression of his countenance seconded, as he exclaimed—"Heavens, my young friend! I did not expect to encounter you in this quarter of the globe, and even now I can scarcely believe the evidence of my senses."

That the emotion of Clarence was obviously painful, the varying colour of his countenance sufficiently evinced; he half

met the advance of the stranger, and then with embarrassment retreated.

"A likeness, Sir, has probably misled you; but it is not the first time that I have been apparently recognized under the same impression."

"I mentioned no name, Sir," replied the other, with astonished accent, "and certainly did not imagine myself *mistaken.*"

"I only meant to say," returned Molesworth, with increased agitation, "I—I—only intended——"

"It is immaterial, Sir," coldly replied the first; "I believed I had met with an old Eastern acquaintance, and, in lieu of him, have indeed encountered a *stranger*, who certainly does not greet me with equally cordial recollection," and turning from him at the conclusion of this speech, he addressed a person near him upon a different subject.

But the former did not appear to pass so rapidly from the mind of Molesworth; anguish

anguish was pourtrayed on every feature, while embarrassment and confusion marked his manner, as he rested against the back of a chair almost for support.

"Ah, how much at this moment do you resemble Charles Moreton!" said Marian Ancaster, as Zitella now first distinguished her childish form amid the crowd. She had fortunately not been sufficiently near, to overhear the conversation between the Countess of Darnford and Mrs. Nugent; but Clarence had followed her steps, and he was at her side when addressed by the elderly stranger; her surprise had been great, and her attention was still more arrested, by the almost wild exclamation of the late inhabitant of Bengal, as he repeated, with an emotion that seemed to supersede caution—"For God's sake, speak not again of that resemblance!"

"Pardon me," said the timid unconscious culprit, and the tears filled her eyes, as her sweet, yet tremulous, voice added

—"I was not aware—I could not have conceived——"

"Marian, dear Marian!" repeated Molesworth.

Our heroine heard not the conclusion; interested far more than she was herself aware, this epithet, applied to the daughter of Mrs. Ancaster, had darted an agonizing pang through her sensitive heart; it was the conscious pang of love first exhibiting his power, when he dipped his arrow in the chalice of jealousy.

She turned from the view, as the hand of Marian was tenderly pressed by that of Molesworth; her downcast eyes, her crimsoned cheeks, as, in listening attention, she received the low accents of his voice, unheard by other ears, and breathed to her's alone, evidenced too surely that it was the lover, and not the friend, of whom she thought, in the semblance of her favourite playmate.

Of all sublunary misfortune, the most

acue

acute is that which the heart experiences on first awakening to a conviction of attachment, unsupported by the anchor of hope; and it is then indeed that love omnipotent, tyrannic love, asserts his power, and for a time weighs down even the barriers of reason, subjugates all the energies of mind to his controul, and

"Wakes the nerve where agonies are born."

Fortunately, as the delicacy, perhaps the pride of our orphan conceived, Molesworth viewed her not at the moment, when sudden pained emotion annihilated self-command; nay, he thought no longer of her; the address of the gentleman who had claimed former acquaintance, had directed his mind to a review of circumstances that engrossed each idea of his soul, for a strange mysterious tale was connected with the Charles Moreton of Marian's recollection, and memory was busy with *the past.*

It was now that the susceptibility, the ardency of those feelings enclosed within the bosom of our orphan, were awakened;

hitherto we have only beheld the heart that bowed not in answer to the professions of man; that had, with presumptuous pride, maintained its own liberty and independence, and smiled defiance at the manœuvring arts of the fluttering phantom of love, and regarded rational friendship as the warmest attribute of her nature—a friendship that must ripen into love, by a reflection of its warmth in the breast of him whom her judgment approved, with unprejudiced interest, and that her breast could accord a preference, which time and circumstance had not cemented. This self-confidence was dangerous to our orphan, as the fears of the more experienced Mrs. Mulgrave had once intimated, for it had rendered her insensible to the growth of an attachment, which it now required no little exertion to destroy, since it had arrived at dangerous maturity, ere she suspected the seeds implanted. The extremes of her character had met on the equator of love; she had passed the line

line of reason, and the tributary tempest was not to be eluded. There was, however, an activity in the soul of Zitella, that aided at this moment the proud wish of concealment, which must ever attend the conviction of unreturned attachment, in the feminine bosom of genuine delicacy. Our orphan waged war with her own heart, and was stimulated to the combat, by that desperation which ever attaches to a forlorn hope.

The duplicity of the insidious Horton, yet vivid in her mind, she viewed the many admirers, the several declared lovers that Miss Clairmond's rooms this evening presented, as playing the same part, and, a sceptic in the professions of *la belle passion*, she considered herself as justified in trifling away the painful hours with their assistance, since *hearts* were not, in her estimation, engaged in the attentions paid; for Zitella had feelings too generous to have voluntarily sported with the affections of any individual. Among the most

most marked of her admirers this evening, were Lord Arthur Craven, and Sir Horace Lister. Zitella conversed with each in turn, but there was a strange versatility in her manner; she was unused to dissimulation, and the perceptible variety of her tones, now forced into vivacity by exertion, then assuming a repellant coldness, to check the mercenary professions of pretended attachment, which disgusted, as reiterated by a Beechley, or a Bertie; now affecting to receive amusement from the eccentricities of Craven, to disguise the real anguish of her feelings, and throw an appearance of even capricious coquetry over the heiress, which chilled the flame that had burnt with purest radiance in the breast of Molesworth.

A little group had collected in one corner of a very superb anti-drawing-room, where the soft playful accents of Mrs. Ancaster articulated, addressing the bevy of male flirts that as usual lounged around her—

"Oh,

"Oh, no more compliments, in mercy; I detest all personal flattery; I never set up for a beauty in my most juvenile years, perhaps from the constant fear, that some second Swift, with blunt honesty, should bid me 'sit down again."

"How bewitching," exclaimed Sir Horace, "is this modest merit, retiring from just encomium!"

The numerous loungers re-echoed the truth of this assertion; Lord Arthur alone did not join in the universal eulogium; a smile hung upon his lips, as in a low voice he addressed Zitella—"Behold the crowd who breathe forth the praises of this *modest* unassuming fair, this matron belle; they have not discrimination to trace, in the very avowal of a failure of vanity, the greatest vanity the human mind can possess; for is it not, in fact, laying claim to a perfection?"

"And the few, my Lord, of your sex, who display that discrimination, would be the first, by flattery, to plant the pernicious

cious seed in the luxuriant *parterre* of youth, and culture its pernicious blossoms with zealous care, are ever ready to point out to notice the weak overgrown stem, with no friendly partiality to their own offspring."

"Surely Mrs. Ancaster, and her numerous admirers, are exceptions to this reflection; for behold she defies the power of flattery to take effect on her all-superior mind," was the reply, with an equivocal expression of scepticism to the reality, in both countenance and manner.

"Well, Lord Arthur, and I really do think, notwithstanding your incredulity, that the female mind may absolutely, once in a century, throw off the thraldom of flattery, and avoid becoming the dupe of a mighty Lord of creation."

"Your Ladyship has applied an observation as general, which I only directed as individual; and pardon me, if I affirm, that I think Lady Zitella Herbert cannot be

be blinded to this affected deficiency of vanity, which the lady in question assumes."

"Whatever may be my conviction, my Lord, I would rather your penetration had not proclaimed the discovery."

"And wherefore?"

"Because it is ungenerous; men may criticize with impunity, while women are often sufficiently weak to appear amused with their satire on a sister fair, without remembering the possibility, nay, the probability, that she may in turn herself become the object of sarcastic observation, and be accused even of the ignoble passion of envy, for having joined in the satiric smile."

"Heavens! what a solemn *tête-à-tête* seems to engross that pair!" exclaimed Mrs. Ancaster, directing her view to the conversants, and advancing at the same moment. "What an enviable man your Lordship is to-night, in being thus honoured

noured by the *serious attention* of Lady Zitella Herbert, while to Sir Horace she only extends her smiles!"

"A proof of female contradiction, at least," was the reply; "you see, Mrs. Ancaster, I am anxious to maintain the charter of my sex in that respect, since the sentimental Penseroso of Sir Horace Lister inspires risibility, and the all whimsical Lord Arthur Craven has absolutely infected me with solemnity."

"Perhaps, my Lady, you are a convert to the doctrine of St. Pierre, and are determined to evince the power of contrast over the human heart?"

"With a second Paul in view, I might be inclined to try the strength of the hypothesis; but in this age of folly, gallantry, and speculation, the reward, I fear, would not be equivalent to the trouble of the exertion."

"You are resolved not to raise the vanity of man," said Craven, in a lowered tone,

tone, "however your Ladyship might have felt inclined to shelter it in your own sex."

"It would be a fallacious experiment, if I did," said Zitella, "since it is arrived at its utmost zenith without."

"It is well that nature has yielded the magic inspiration of beauty to the lips that can utter so harsh a sentence," said the former.

"Your Lordship is at least determined to evince, by reciprocal severity, in an oblique inference, that ours must have arrived at the zenith of imbecility, when the expectation of pleasing or gratifying could produce so complimentary an observation."

"Were I inclined to sport this infidel hypothesis, I would not have ventured to maintain it before one, who in herself personifies its refutation."

"Peace, I pray thee, peace! be a barbarian, a savage, a moraliser, a cynic, a fashionist,

fashionist, in short, any thing but *un homme gallant;* I could support you better in any other character:

"Take any form but that——"

"Your Ladyship should most undoubtedly make allowances, in consideration of the novelty of the part sustained; gallantry is so rare a tormentor in the present age, that, viewed as a stranger, it surely may claim the rights of courtesy," said Mrs. Ancaster.

"Nay," added Lady Darnford, who had joined them within the last few minutes, "if such be your lenity, I would advise *the stranger* to tarry where he is publicly informed so welcome a reception will await him."

"Gallantry," exclaimed the Baronet, "is but a faint shadow of love; indeed, so slight is the affinity, that I would wish to deny it altogether. Love, according to my creed, is at once the most refined, yet

yet vivid and ardent passion of which the human breast is susceptible; and most fully do I coincide with the poetic Littleton, who, if my memory be correct, describes those votaries of Hymen, who, linked by the hand of Cupid, glide securely down the stream of felicity, as issuing at the same moment from a celestial abode, meet in their descent as kindred souls, and form in this nether world that bond we style matrimony,

"Where thought meets thought, ere from the lip it part,
And each warm wish springs mutual from the heart!"

And thus in union joined, like the first pair in Paradise, hand in hand pursue their course, leaving earth, and its more terrestrial cares, to the sons of grovelling ambition, while resting in the medium of anticipated heaven, they raise their hopes to that future, which can alone surpass the present: but I dare not trust myself farther on the subject; for me there is an intoxi-

intoxication of dangerous excess, in that love which audibly speaks in the eyes, and lives on a sigh!"

"Yes, Sir Horace, and, like a sigh, be quickly lost in air!"

"And yet *leave the pang behind,*" rejoined Craven, with suppressed emotion.

"Most likely, my Lord; the pang of weariness, for time mispent in folly."

"And does Lady Zitella Herbert view love as one of the follies of life?"

Our orphan started, for her trembling heart recognized the voice which had first awakened it to love. Molesworth had, unperceived, been listening to the conversation, for a fancifully decorated pillar had sheltered him heretofore from the view of Zitella. She hesitated a moment, to nerve her own accents, and sought, beneath the covert of affected lightness, to disguise the real state of her feelings.

"Surely the greatest, in the present order of society; it is considered almost

as an Utopian phantom, reflected by the beams of circumstance or convenience."

"A very *convenient circumstance* certainly, and adopted, perhaps, on that ground; a thrifty saving prudence, which spares the heart from unpleasant trials."

"From disappointment at least," said Zitella; "for where we expect a scanty harvest, the gleaner would be almost superfluous."

"Disappointment!" rejoined Craven, assuming the very air of a modern coxcomb, "that is quite exploded from the male vocabulary; we are now the favourites of fortune, and are not accustomed to sue in vain—we do not even know how to play disappointed love, unless your Ladyship condescend to teach us our parts."

"Indeed, my Lord, whoever would undertake this office, would do the state some service; but if I were deputed, I would render the task concise, by hanging chains on your *vanity;* and the wings of that once

once clipt, I doubt not the lesson of disappointment would be visibly effective."

"You would threaten annihilation to the existence of man," said Lady Darnford, "by reducing to practice the recipe you speak of; the very seat of life would be endangered, for its sole aliment is the delights of self-satisfaction."

"With heaven in view, death would be divested of all its horrors," ejaculated Sir Horace, bowing to our heroine; "therefore, fair corrector, your threat is powerless to wound."

"Or rather," said Colonel Bertie, "Lady Zitella will then practise the very acme of cruelty, and merely suffer us at distance to admire the heaven we are unworthy to gain."

A disdain, that arose from unsuspected causes, sullied the affectedly gay expression which our orphan's features had hitherto presented; and, without turning

to

to the speaker, or granting one smile to the flight of this complimentary effusion, she repeated—"Well, most elevated and etherial romancers, when, with your usual inconsistency, you descend from the elevation of your self-created heaven, to a mansion more congenial with mortality, we may perhaps venture to address you in the intelligible language of common sense;" and partially closing her eyes, with cold indifference, she half reclined her lovely form against the same pillar which had recently concealed Molesworth from her view, whose arm was at this moment taken by Mrs. Ancaster, to assist her through the crowd into the adjoining room, where her progress was momentarily arrested by Lady Darnford's addressing her.

"Our old friend, Lismore, has left all his juvenility on the banks of the Ganges."

The attention of Zitella was aroused, for she recollected that as the appel-

lation by which, in the course of the evening, she had heard the Bengal stranger distinguished.

"He has held," continued the Countess, "for very many years, a high situation in the Court of Judicature in Bengal, even that of Judge; and I am told no man ever balanced the scales in that country with more correct poise; it is in all places a difficult situation, but in that quarter of the globe, I am told, very particularly so; your old acquaintance has derived both wealth and honour in it, and has returned to his native isle, to reap his reward, and repose his cradled age among the associates of his youth. But I think you were also from Bengal, Mr. Molesworth, and probably know——"

"It is nearly fifteen months," interrupted Clarence, hesitatingly, "since I left that settlement."

"And nearly two-and twenty since he was there," continued the Countess; "but,

as

as an Englishman of consideration, I conceived it more than probable you might have been known to him."

"The fame of Judge Lismore has certainly reached me," returned the former, "as he stood high in public opinion, and was held, as your Ladyship is rightly impressed, in great estimation."

The eyes of our interested orphan, however, marked, with renewed surprise, the embarrassment which yet hung upon the lips and manner of Molesworth, even in speaking of the stranger, and every allusion to the East, but wholly at a loss to account for it, felt only certain that it existed; but as it appeared unobserved by any other, he gradually recovered, in a degree, his usual tone, although extreme gravity, and even gloom, yet kept possession of his countenance.

LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

CHAP. III.

Ah! qui pourroit effacer dans un jour,
La profandeur des traces de l'amour?
C'est le torrent qui sillennant la plaine,
A tout impreint du sable qu'il entraine,
Les pres rougis les guerets depouillés;
Marquent les lieux qui san cours a souillés,
Mais un printems suffit à la nature
Pour reparer l'email et la verdure;
La vie entiere à piene reproduit
La paix du cœur qu'un seul instant detruit.

BERNARD.

A Matrimonial Project.

LADY Zitella Herbert was not one of those females who are ever solicitous not only to meet, but to brave danger; from mock unreal

unreal heroism, she could even admit the prudence of retreat, provided it were uninfluenced by any mean or ignoble motive. Terrified at the state of her own heart, writhing beneath the pang of unrequited love, she felt that the future happiness of her life depended upon the extinction of a hopeless attachment, for she had given a promise to a dying mother to enter the wedded state, and having done so, she conceived it doubly a duty to conquer that tender sentiment which now pervaded her heart, that no rebellion to its future legitimate claimant should mar the purity of her marriage vow.

Zitella, actuated by this impression, displayed little of heroism, but some portion of rationality, in avoiding the object who thus unconsciously enslaved her affections, and in immediate absence sought an oblivion of a preference, which she yet hoped might yield to this powerful antidote, and leave her affections once more at liberty to meet those of the individual who might

seek their possession, in the united character of lover and of husband.

The late Countess of Darnford had intimated an especial desire, that our heroine should pass, in part of the time destined to be spent in the retired mansion of Lord Edgeworth, one month of the London winter, as a seasonable interruption to the dissipation of a town life, which Lady Darnford feared might prove prejudicial to the health, although it failed to injure the morals of her beloved orphan. This expressed wish sanctioned the resolution of Zitella; and having, some days previous, received a letter from Lord Edgeworth, intimating that his house was ever open to receive her, when she should feel inclined to pursue the dictates of parental counsel, the opportunity was now readily embraced, of accepting this kind invitation, and she prepared to inform Mr. Nugent of her intention.

The nabob heard of the departure of his guest with regret; her vivacity and

good

good sense had beguiled many a tedious day, and given life to many a gloomy hour; while her urbanity, and consideration for his domestic discomfortures, had always lent their aid, to avert from his Fanny, as far as lay within the scope of her ability, the derision of many an unfeeling fashionist, or the stare of wonder, succeeded by the smile of contempt, which often mounted to the lip of a bidden guest; indeed, her relationship to him, and her rank in society, gave a certain weight and respect to the appearance of Mrs. Nugent abroad, which she would ever have failed herself to create; while, on the other hand, Fanny's affectionate disposition, and her real regard for our heroine, rendered her insensible of the claims upon Zitella from the Plain of Salisbury; and she loudly opposed her leaving Park-lane, to visit the abode of "rooks and owls, on a wild frightful heath, exposed to robbers and hobgoblins, as all *desert* houses, they said, were."

The removal, however, had not been lightly determined upon, and entreaties nor expostulations effected the solicited detention. Irwin was ordered to pack a part of her Lady's wardrobe in readiness for travelling, and Zitella proposed to make her *congé* to her town friends, ere she quitted the metropolis for Wiltshire.

The most painful name on her visiting list, was that of Ancaster; for the extreme intimacy, nay, the domesticated footing on which Molesworth was received at the house of the Dean, rendered it more than probable she might encounter this enemy to her tranquillity, beneath the roof of the parents of her supposed rival; while, viewing Mrs. Ancaster as the immediate connection of her early friends, the Morelands, she felt the impropriety of merely leaving her card at the door, and was thus compelled to encounter the chance of meeting Clarence, should the family be at home.—*At home* they were, and with a composed dignity, that arose from

from the true delicacy of a wounded heart, Zitella entered the apartment in which Mrs. Ancaster this morning received her visitors, and Molesworth, the fatal Molesworth, was too surely present. Lady Darnford, Colonel Bertie, and Captain Lister, formed a small circle; but Marian had retired from the group, and, after an embarrased courtsey to our heroine, had returned to her previous amusement, of overlooking a book of coloured drawings; nor did the *maternal belle* correct the impropriety of this perfect inattention to the assembled visitors, in her *naive enfant,* as she styled the timid Marian, who would be the child, and display her age, notwithstanding all her endeavours to mature the sweet blossom.

Zitella caught at the first pause in conversation, to announce her intention of quitting town in a few days, on a visit to her other guardian, Lord Edgeworth.

"And, pray, to what motive, my retiring young lady, are we to impute this dereliction from the gaieties of the metro-

polis at this season, so delightful to juvenile votaries at the shrine of dissipation? must we nominate it caprice, or necessity?"

"Neither, my Lady," returned the former, gravely; "the anticipated absence from town, and its fascinations, has the simple origin of a voluntary compliance with the request of a lost parent," and tears filled the eyes of our orphan as she spoke, for she mentally drew a comparison between the present unfeeling Countess of Darnford, and the beloved mother, who had formerly borne a similar appellation.

"The fascinations of town, and the attractions of the votaries of dissipation, do not all alike influence each youthful breast," said Molesworth, turning to the Dowager; "higher duties claim the attention sometimes; and while we regret the effect, we cannot sufficiently appreciate the source."

The eyes of Molesworth seemed to rest, with an expression of interest, upon the countenance of Zitella, who was soon involved in a *tête-à-tête* conversation with Captain

Captain Lister, wherein she appeared to the former in a new and more amiable light than she ever yet had done upon any preceding occasion. The subject which engrossed them, was one which admitted a discovery of her companionable qualities, and at once exhibited a mind well stored with literary acquirement, and gifted by nature with superior endowments; but while every sentence pourtrayed these certain advantages, they were delivered with a deference to the opinion of her associate, and a winning sweetness of manner, that carried twofold effect to the arguments of sound reasoning.

Molesworth listened with delighted astonishment; he ventured occasionally to offer an interruption, and by degrees eventually diverted a part of her attention to himself: this was no sooner perceived by Lister, than he became silent in proportion; and at length, almost withdrawing from the point in discussion, sat wrapt in gloomy contemplation, from which he was

only roused by Zitella's laughing observation, that she had certainly paid the morning visit of a rustic, forgetful of all the avocations of London residents: she bade a courteous adieu to each individual of the party, and was handed to her carriage by Molesworth; but ere they had reached the door, the coachman had drawn off, to admit the barouche of another set of the train of morning loungers; and our heroine was unresistingly drawn into an adjoining room, until the gentlemen of the whip had again changed situations.

The one carriage having again made way for the other, our heroine once more reached the hall, and saw Lister descending the stairs; his face was flushed, and his whole appearance indicated emotion; she was in fact so much struck, that she was doubtful whether illness might not have been the cause, and actually hesitated whether she should not make the enquiry; but at this moment she observed that his eyes were intently fixed upon her, and some

some degree of surprise passed over his countenance, as he beheld her hand yet retained in that of Molesworth, as they issued from the room where they had for a few minutes withdrawn; the glow of crimson in a moment subsided, and a deathlike paleness succeeded. In hesitating accents, she mentioned the retreat of her carriage, and the arrival of the ladies he had just passed; but the thoughts of Lister appeared neither engrossed by the visitors, or their carriage, he saw only the two objects before him, and grasping the hand of the orphan, energetically exclaimed—"You are about leaving us, Lady Zitella; adieu, Heaven bless and protect its most perfect work!" and, raising her hand respectfully to his lips, he vanished.

Astonishment and confusion rendered our heroine motionless, until recalled to a circumstance by the voice of Lady Darnford, who, in her accustomed manner, exclaimed—

" One lover to another still succeeds,
Another, and another after that,
And the last fool is welcome as the former,
'Till having lov'd his hour out, he gives place,
And mingles with the herd that went before."

The serenity of the Countess, as she passed on with a provoking smile, suffused the cheeks of Zitella with the painful blushes of mortification and resentment, while it recalled to Molesworth his original impression of *the heiress.* Neither replied; but in making his parting bow, it certainly conveyed a coldness of manner, which restored that frigidity that had originally marked his conduct towards her, while it involuntarily created a similar reserve on her side; and no sooner had the carriage driven from the door, than the varied feelings of her heart sought relief in a gush of tears; she did not, however, allow herself long this indulgence, for she felt too acutely its danger, and still compelled herself to fulfil the routine

tine of visits she had allotted to be paid this morning.

Upon being once more at liberty to direct the coachman to return to Park-lane, she experienced a considerable solace, in the consciousness of her own commendable exertions to banish the seductive Clarence from her thoughts, and yet maintained a resolution of its continuance.

As the carriage stopped at the door of her uncle's dwelling, and she was ascending its steps, she beheld the Dean of L——, who had entered with her; neither Mr. or Mrs. Nugent were at home, and the friends engaged in rational converse uninterrupted.

After much had passed on other subjects, the Dean said—" I was anxious, Lady Zitella, to have had my daughter better, or rather more intimately known to you, and I regret that the very endeavours I embraced to inspire a similar desire in the bosom of Marian, has produced

duced a contrary effect; for my high estimation of your Ladyship has infected her mind with a dread of your superiority, that distances the gratification your society would otherwise have afforded her; yet I think, perhaps with a father's fondness, that, had she ventured to converse unreservedly with you, you might not have deemed her intellectual powers deficient, however enveloped and depressed by a childish terror, which maternal affection has injudiciously fostered; and this is now the prevailing and perceptible weakness of her character. She is not formed to solicit admiration, neither will she attempt to shine or attract; this I should not regret, did I not perceive she sinks into a contrary extreme, and that her general apprehensions of mingling in promiscuous society, the fear of that bugbear, ridicule, the smile of derision, the chill of repulse, render her, in appearance, but the simpleton child, too early brought forth, and more adapted to caress her doll,

doll, than to adopt the habits of maturer recreations."

"That this excess of timidity is a disadvantage," said Zitella, "I am not sufficiently a dissimularian to deny; but it must be a double proof of the intrinsic merit of Miss Ancaster, that even beneath a veil, her perfections cannot be wholly concealed, and that they have already secured her *one* admiring friend, in the person of an individual, who, although young himself, is distinguished for the attributes of a comprehensive mind and enlightened judgment, and already appears the captive of her fascinations."

Zitella had uttered this remark from a spontaneous impulse, and she was herself, at the moment, wholly ignorant that it had arisen from a latent hope of hearing a refutation of her fears; for the animated countenance of Molesworth, whenever he had that morning addressed her, and those attentions so exclusively sacred to a tender preference, which flow unbidden in each unstudied

unstudied moment, had fanned that flame which needed but the air of hope to rise clear and bright as the vestal fire, whose extinction is followed by death.

"If you allude to Clarence Molesworth," was the reply, "I will candidly avow, the inference drawn from his attentions gratifies me, for there is no human being to whom I would resign her with such perfect approbation; he would, by tenderness, nerve her timid virtues, not repress the energy of her bosom by weak indulgence of habitual fear; and his own heart, linked with her's, would, by reflection, expand the generous nature of its cherished object. Marian is yet too young to become a wife, and I would not to any other individual in creation, grant my consent to her adopting the character at an age so early; yet, alas! I dread her remaining with her mother; Alicia is too much the fond doating parent; and from an amiable exuberance of maternal feelings, she will confirm this timidity into a serious

a serious misfortune; for nothing weakens the mind, or tortures the heart more, than that slavish fear which depresses the exertions of the soul."

"Mr. Molesworth ranks very high in the estimation of my friends," said Zitella, endeavouring to assume a tone of indifference, and yet too noble to seek a covert for her own attachment, in an affected detraction from the real merit of its object. "When yourself and Mrs. Mulgrave," she continued, "more particularly grant him such distinguished partiality—when even Lady Darnford condescends to admire him as a rational creature, he must indeed be no common character; and your amiable daughter has great reason to be flattered, in having secured the affections of so estimable a member of society."

"And I," returned the Dean, with visible agitation, "would feel even proud in acknowledging him for my son: he is an unfortunate young man," he added, and his voice lost its firmness, as it again repeated,

peated, "Unfortunate, most unfortunate! but I will not accumulate the ills of fate, which have menaced this hapless youth, by thwarting the wishes, the noble affections of his ardent heart. I speak this in confidence, Lady Zitella: the opportunities I had of observing the domesticated virtues, the very refined understanding, and cultivated talents of your Ladyship, during my residence beneath the same roof in Dorsetshire, strengthened and confirmed by recent acquaintance, has rendered me most sensible of the benefit that would accrue to my dear little girl from your regard—yes, my young friend, you alone can render her worthy of securing the valued heart of Clarence Molesworth."

"Miss Ancaster, my dear Sir, possesses *natively* all those virtues which fill your paternal bosom with present joy and future hope. Young and docile as she is, surely it were best, in my opinion, to permit him to whom you resign the precious

cious charge," she added, with faltering voice, "to mould the pliant materials, after his own model of perfection."

"You may be right, my amiable friend," resumed the Dean; "if Marian, in all her simplicity, and genuinely *naive* character, has really secured the heart of such a man, we may perhaps, even by an apparent improvement, rob her, in his eyes, of some of those attractions that have led my hopes to the blissful perspective at which you point."

Sorry are we to record, that our heroine at this moment discovered some of the imperfections of humanity; for if she did not actually envy the little Ancaster, she certainly repined at her own fate, in having only seen enough of this devoted favourite, to have made the discovery, that she possessed a heart only to bestow it *unsolicited;* the reflection was no less painful than mortifying; but her ruminations were uninterrupted, for the Dean was himself completely lost in a similar manner.

ner. At length he abruptly broke silence, by saying—" Pray, Lady Zitella, did you ever hear any mention made of the family of Molesworth?"

" Never," was the laconic reply.

" Have you ever heard any *particular* remark relative to himself, or his connexions?"

" Never," she answered; " at least no direct or authentic information with regard to his connexions, and none respecting himself, beyond what his best friends would wish him to merit."

A smile of satisfaction played over the thoughtful features of the divine.

" It is indeed gratifying to my heart to hear you say so; yes, he is an estimable creature, and in hailing him my son, all the anxieties of a father will cease, and every aspiring hope be amply gratified; for they may rest secure on his many virtues, satisfied that beneath their protection, my timid Marian will be sheltered from the storms of fate."

The

The heart of the melancholy heiress assented to the prediction of the Dean; but unable longer to sustain any degree of composure in the discussion of so painful a subject, she abruptly turned the conversation into a different channel; yet in the sanctuary of her own chamber, where busy thought murdered repose, in a review of the past, she recollected the insinuations once thrown out by Sir Edward Horton, of the *natural tie* which linked this very Clarence Molesworth to the family of Ancaster; but as that impression was now wholly done away, interest, or curiosity, yet lingered and rested on the veil of mystery which appeared to envelop the object of her regard.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

My best beloved! although unpitying skies,
And wrathful fortune sternly thus conspire,
To bid thy servant's lingering steps retire
Far from the temper'd gleam of beauty's eyes;
Bound still to thine, by love's eternal ties,
That heart remains, where chaste and warm desire
Yet fondly glows, with all its former fire,
And death's cold touch, and wasting time defies.

CAMOENS.

Early Love.

THE evening previous to the departure of Lady Zitella Herbert from Park-lane, the following letter was left for her at the house of Mr. Nugent, and she received it after a return from one of the winter theatres:

"THE

"The signature of this letter, Lady Zitella, will no doubt create momentary surprise, but I trust the contents will not transform it into resentment. While we were inhabitants of the same spot, a consciousness of my own demerits has been an effectual seal upon my lips; but now, far removed either from your displeasure or contempt, the only indulgence I allow my long suppressed feelings, is that of detailing to you on paper, the source of my grief. My heart throbs as though it would burst the ligatures which confine it, at the painful—I had almost said *hope*, that we may meet no more!

"Oh Zitella! for at this moment suffer me to wave distinctions, thy image is entwined round its every fibre; each nerve beats responsive to thy beloved name! All the perfections of thy nature are there enthroned, and every captive sense acknowledges thy worth. But cruel *fortune* has placed insurmountable barriers between us—myself, a poor indigent son of Mars,

without a sous, save what the precarious chance of war may afford, dare not raise my aspiring hopes to *the heiress of Darnford!*

"Zitella, even in childish years, my partial heart acknowledged you for its future idol; I treasured the remembrance of our first interview beneath the thatched cottage of your aged friend, the venerable village priest, and you are ever present to my mind, as when I first beheld you supporting the aching head of his respected wife, while their infant grandchildren clung upon your knees, and in the lisping accents of the cradle, blessed their benefactress. Such appears before my mortal vision, the endearing form of her I love! In the midst of the perilous campaigns of a distant country; in war, in sickness, and in the very shades where death has stalked abroad in the most horrific guise of slaughtered friends and companions, I yet lost not, even for a moment, the image of my early love. Alas! I knew not then she was destined to become *an heiress;* to be cele-

celebrated not only by rank, but by abundant wealth, high beyond my most aspiring view.

"I returned to England to learn this fatal intelligence. I obtained leave of absence immediately on my arrival on my native shore—and need I say, that Dorsetshire was visited with anxious celerity? I saw not Zitella, but I conversed of her with Mrs. Mulgrave; her information, adroitly culled, respecting those painful fears you entertained of *mercenary profession;* your scepticism, in regard to the addresses of any *unfortuned* suitor, was decisive. I could not bear to be regarded in the light of a fortune-hunter, by the woman whose good opinion was dearer to me than the universe! as the mere moth, who had been attracted by the lustre of her wealth, and whose professions had been tendered after her elevation in the fortuitous wheel. No, beloved Zitella! from that moment I resigned all hope; yet I could not forego the gratification of ever

more beholding you; and I almost reconciled with reason, a journey to the metropolis, where you then shone, by fancying there was a necessity for paying a visit of ceremony to my family connexions; for little affection subsisted between those individuals and myself; but an ostensible excuse was all I looked to.

"It was on the very first night of your appearance in public, that I again saw you. I was in the next box—I spoke to my brother Horace, who was at your side, but you evidently recognized me not. For this cruel addition to my misfortune, I was not prepared--to be not even remembered as a former acquaintance, by the beloved object of my heart, was indeed more than I could support. I was deeply hurt; cruelly mortified—yes, Zitella, at that moment I was proudly indignant; and I determined not to force the recollection of *the heiress* to her indigent idolist.

"The meeting in the Tower was unexpected;

pected; but it was far more gratifying, for it enabled me to avert some small injury from the loved companion of my silent hours. From that time I have occasionally seen and conversed with you: once I faltered in my resolution; your sweet smile, your endearing manner, almost overcame my boasted heroism: but, Zitella, you may not remember the half serious, half laughing observation, but I never, never can forget it! A juvenile female friend was congratulating you on your bevy of conquests, and of the many candidates who sought to enter with you the pale of matrimony, wondering, in childish sport, who would prove the selected individual.

"Your reply—that reply annihilated the rising profession of attachment which had arisen to my lips—'Be not so rapid in your congratulations, my young friend; I am not inclined to resign my liberty, my heart and hand, to a needy *fortune-*

hunter, a spendthrift noble, *or a pennyless younger brother!*'

"I shuddered at the declaration—I was the *pennyless younger brother!* True, I had a devoted heart to offer—a heart all your own. But what were my means to prove it such as it really was? Could I bear to be regarded in the light of these mercenary prostituted wretches?—to be conceived such by you? Ah no! never, never! I could support every ill, in preference to that cruel behest of fate! But, however I might have resolution to hitherto veil my presumptuous preference of the *heiress of Darnford,* I can no longer remain to behold the claims of a successful rival. I have sought a foreign station, and succeeded to my wish. By early dawn to-morrow, I bid a long adieu to my native land; and what is far, far more painful, a last adieu to her I so truly love! I would invoke the powers of Heaven to receive you under their especial protection

tion—but goodness such as your's, secures to itself its own reward. I would attempt to wish you happiness, even in the arms of another—but honest Nature recoils from a picture she refuses to sketch; and I dare not contemplate it, lest it destroy the small remnant of fortitude I have summoned to my aid.

"Had Zitella, the only child of an Earl, *the heiress* of accumulated wealth, been but the simple village maid, divested of all distinction, save that of personal merit, I might have been happy—I might have contributed to render her so; but placed by fortune on a pinnacle, I become dizzy while I contemplate; she is as far removed above my expectations, as worldly distinctions could well render her. But the time wears; I have lingered over my paper, unwilling to resign the last ray of comfort I can ever know. The morning dawns; the solitary candle yet lingers in its socket, the sad but just emblem of my wretched

fate. Dear, much loved Zitella, adieu, adieu!

GERALD LISTER."

The tears of our heroine literally bedewed the letter of the unfortunate Lister —"Here," she mentally exclaimed, "here then should I have secured a heart devoted to myself alone—here had I at last found that precious treasure, *disinterested* love! and here, too late, am I convinced that such a being does exist, and did exist for me! Dear, noble Lister! why did those distinguishing traits of merit, diffidence and modesty, so wholly envelop thee, as to conceal the vulture that preyed on thy generous heart? Would to Heaven that I could recal the past! that the hand of her thou lovest could reward thy heroic virtues—and yet, would the hand alone satisfy the delicacy of thy affection, for that is all I could have bestowed?—perfect esteem,

esteem, regard—but, no—not love, that is not to be influenced; and Lister, estimable as I may believe him, could not have ever reigned my bosom's lord!"

When the heart has acknowledged to itself a preference; when it suffers the pang of disappointment from the indifference of its selected object, it is ever most inclined to compassionate sufferings that arise from a similar source; and the bosom of our heroine sympathized with tenderest anguish, over the recital of the wretched Gerald; nor could she forbear classing, as one of the attendant *miseries of an heiress,* that she was doomed to be subjected to the hypocritical professions of a Horton, whilst a really disinterested affection dared not even avow itself, lest it should wear the semblance of mercenary depravity.

Previous to our orphan quitting town, she had been compelled to engage in her service a new Abigail, the faithful Irwin having become the wife of Burrows, and

being established with him in the business of glover, by the liberality of her lady, who sincerely regretted the loss of this valuable domestic, nor felt reconciled to it by the woman who supplied her place, for she displayed too much of the servile and flattering town-bred toilette minion, to be approved by Zitella.

Mr. Nugent accompanied his niece in his own carriage; and her maid was the only attendant she required during her *séjour* beneath the roof of her singular guardian; for she recollected the extraordinary habits of his present existence, and wished not to distress or disturb the calm monotony of his life, with the appendages of carriage, servants, and horses.

Within the last stage of their journey, Mr. Nugent had agreed to remain at the inn, and Zitella to proceed the next ten miles by herself, to avoid inconvenience to those inhabitants under the isolated roof of his old acquaintance. An affectionate adieu, with reciprocal regret at separation,

separation, a cordial renewal of invitation to return to Park-lane at the end of the allotted month, and a promise of compliance, followed.

Mr. Nugent set forward for London, and Zitella arrived at Heath House, where she was received by its singular owner with parental kindness, while the volatile Flora was almost wild with joy; she kissed, caressed her, examined the make and form of every article of her dress, with curiosity and interest; then, deeply sighing, compared them with her own, and burst into tears; but ashamed of this weakness, she very wisely left the room, and hoped she had been wholly unobserved; she certainly escaped any audible remark, and when she returned, some little anecdote of the day amused her childish fancy, and buried the remembrance of her sorrow. The clock soon struck the early hour of ten, when the late gay inhabitant of a St. James's circle was summoned by Phœbe,

with her taper, to the bed-chamber appointed for her reception.

The next day, as Zitella, with her young friend, was descending the stairs, the former observed a large dark room, which Phœbe was most diligently sweeping out —"This room," cried our heroine, entering it, "appears to command a very extensive view, and over a prospect less dreary than any other I have yet seen in this house."

"It was once a billiard-room," replied Flora, "and it is called so yet—but I have never seen it used, except as a thoroughfare for my father."

"A thoroughfare!" re-echoed her companion; "why, does not this apartment terminate the angle of the house?"

"Not quite," was the reply.

"Hush, Miss," cried Phœbe, looking around apprehensively; "you know it is not right to speak about it, for my Lord may be angry."

"He

"He would have no reason to be so," returned the former; "for I could not betray what I do not know; for, indeed," she continued, addressing Zitella, "it is as much wrapt in mystery to me as it can be to you; all that I intended to say was——"

"Dear me, Miss," interrupted Phœbe, "how can you be so imprudent with a stranger! I am sure I would not say a word if I knew; although I can't but think it very odd, after all, that my Lord shuts himself up there in that closet, for hours and hours, and nobody can tell about what; and one day, when I asked him to let me clean it out, and as he made no reply, I thought he would not object, and so I was going to turn the key, which he had left in it while he was reading a letter I had brought him, and he flew into such a passion, that he frightened me out of my wits—and he called me a daughter of Eve, though she died so long before I was born; and

and my mother's name, he knew as well as myself, was Patty Hicks."

"Well, Phœbe," interrupted Flora, laughing, "we are not very anxious about your pedigree; do hasten breakfast, for Lady Zitella and myself are half famished," and taking the arm of her companion, they repaired to the sitting-room, the door of which Flora very carefully closed, and then said:

"Now, dear Lady Zitella, I must acknowledge myself nearly as curious about this closet as poor Phœbe herself; for thither my father daily retires, and shuts himself up for hours; indeed, frequently when he returns from it, his countenance betrays agitation, which can arise from no common cause."

"But did you not once tell me," cried our heroine, "that you had gained an entrance into this apartment?"

"Yes," she replied, "I did; but if it contained any thing particular then, I was

too

too young, and too terrified by my father's solemnly impressive manner, to observe; but do not let us recur to that scene, it always makes me melancholy; but since that period, some boxes have been brought from London by my father, and their contents deposited there; for only the empty covers remained in this room the next day; and whatever they conveyed had certainly a strong effect upon his mind, for he did not recover even his usual serenity for several days: but let us not speak of this; it is a gloomy theme, and will in time render me as melancholy as himself—for I have not even my dear mother to console me."

Lord Edgeworth entered the room as his daughter closed the sentence; and it was evident he had overheard the maternal appellation, for he sighed heavily, as, with steady gravity, he repeated—"I fear, Flora, you have transgressed my commands, and violated your own promise."

Miss Edgeworth looked distressed—"I—I did

I did not—I forgot; indeed I could not help mentioning my poor mother; but I have not asked a single question—indeed I have not; although——"

"Enough," said Edgeworth, with emphatic severity of tone, to which his countenance corresponded not, for a tear of anguish dropped on his manly cheek.

Flora obeyed, and was silent, while she busied herself to arrange the cups in more exact order on the breakfast-tray, as it lay on the table before her.

When the meal was completed, and Miss Edgeworth had retired to make those domestic arrangements their circumscribed establishment rendered necessary, her father embraced the opportunity of addressing his young visitor—"My singular situation, my dear Lady Zitella, must have excited your curiosity, and perhaps your interest; it is a subject too painful to dwell on, but permit me at once to come to the point I have in view, and forgive me, if, having made my request in concise

cise terms, I immediately dismiss the theme. It will be nothing new to you to learn, that my poor Flora is not happy under existing circumstances—but they are *unalterable,* and therefore admit not of discussion; my boon, however, is, that you will not encourage her to converse upon past days of happiness"—his Lordship struggled for composure—" that you will check every desire she may express of returning to London—of seeing——" and again articulation became impeded—" of seeing *her mother!*"

That word dissolved his resolution; he was agonized to torture, and yet subdued even to tears, as he abruptly left the room.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

I shun the crowd, and dwell alone,
In the calm trance of undisturb'd despair!

CAMOENS.

" ——————Oh all ye gods
Who govern this great world, and bring about
Things strange and unexpected, can it be!"

The mendicant Drummer.

DAY after day passed in the same dull round, and one was but a sample of the rest. Lord Edgeworth was gloom personified, and all the conversation that could amuse Flora being soon exhausted, a melancholy void succeeded. Books assisted in some measure to pass the hours; but the pursuit of each of the trio was different,

different, and their taste, in the course of reading, certainly did not assimilate; yet they deemed it but civil, their circle being so circumscribed, not to indulge separate sources of amusement; each felt restraint —a necessity to remain together, and an ardent desire to separate; for even Flora was in a constant state of distress, at not being allowed to enquire any particulars of her beloved parent, from an individual whom she doubted not could give her every information she wished; and she was inclined to be angry with our heroine, for not volunteering intelligence, that she was convinced she must know would afford her the highest gratification, and at the same time save her the conscientious scruple of breaking a promise extorted from her by Lord Edgeworth, not to question their young visitor on this forbidden subject. Circumstances thus situated, it might reasonably be expected, that

"Time in advance behind him hid his wings,
And seem'd to creep, decrepid with his age."

Three

Three weeks at length elapsed—three gloomy tedious weeks! Lord Edgeworth had ceased to continue even those trifling efforts to sustain conversation, which he had exerted on the first arrival of his ward, and his voice was now seldom heard, save in monosyllabic replies; a deep impenetrable melancholy clouded the energies of his once active mind; and the silly childish Flora was a companion ill suited to entertain our superiorly-endowed orphan; her weak prattle wearied rather than amused; and every day continued to drag on with insipid monotony.

Zitella heaved many a sigh in secret, for absence had not produced the desired effect; she felt this melancholy retirement rather strengthened than lessened the hopeless attachment of her heart; her mind required active employment, and varied stimulus, to divert it from dwelling on the image of the estimable Clarence Molesworth, and it was an image too interesting,

ing, too valued, to be contemplated without danger to her peace.

It was one evening in the fourth week after the arrival of Lady Zitella Herbert at Heath House, that the juniors had left their gloomy unsocial companion, for a walk to a neighbouring cottage, to visit a peasant family, whom the bounty of our heroine had relieved from abject want, that they beheld themselves followed, and at length apparently watched, by a boy of singular appearance. He wore a tattered soldier's garb, and was clean, though ragged; he had one hand tied up in a sling; across his shoulder was suspended a small drum; and a green shade over his eyes, gave the painful impression of one of our Egyptian victims. They, however, at length lost sight of the wanderer; and, after a walk of unusual extent, were driven home by a slight drizzling rain.

Upon a stone near the portico of Heath House, they beheld the young soldier weeping most bitterly; moved by the unaffected

affected grief of the lad, Zitella approached, and, in sympathetic accents, enquired its source.

Big tears fell on his bosom; even his hands were wet, as they lay clasped in each other on his knee, with the drops of sorrow, while sighs, almost to suffocation, long impeded articulation—"I am a poor forlorn wanderer," he at length replied; "there is no spot on earth where I can rest my weary head. I have no home, Lady, no friend, no one who cares for me, or who will afford me succour or relief!"

"Your dress announces not only your profession, but, I fear, the miseries which sometimes attend it," cried our heroine, whose eyes filled with tears of compassion. "You have probably visited Egypt; but I trust your grief does not arise from the loss of that precious sense, which the shade on your eyes first led me to fear."

"No, Madam, the sight is now, I hope, safe, though I still wear a shade, to shelter it from danger; but I am yet many a weary mile

mile from my native village, and I am torn from all I love on earth !"

A gush of grief interrupted his speech.

"Do not let a sense of poverty distress you," rejoined Zitella, drawing out her purse; "I will afford you the means of reaching home in comfort."

"And I," said Flora, "I have but one shilling in the world, but you are very welcome to that," and she extended towards him the hand which held it.

The mendicant fell upon his knees, and received it with fervent gratitude, while he prayed Heaven to bless the youthful donor, and reward that benevolent heart which had bestowed its *all* of worldly wealth upon the needy suppliant.

"Indeed," cried Flora, "there is no cause to be so thankful, for I have no means here of spending it half so much to my own satisfaction, and it has lain for days useless in my pocket. Come to-morrow morning; I will speak to my father about you,

you, and I do not doubt he will do something to relieve your distresses."

"Alas!" he returned, "I am ill, weak, and unable to walk further—for Heaven's sake, afford me shelter for to-night; for, although it does not rain at this moment, the clouds hang heavy, and the ground is too wet to become my pillow."

"I will speak to the owner of this house," said Zitella, "and we will endeavour to find you some accommodation for the night—wait here my return."

The young friends sought the Viscount; but no place could they find for the poor wanderer, since none of the rooms, save those occupied, were furnished; if they had been, they were damp from long disuse, and the want of fire, none having been for years lighted within their stoves. At last Flora exclaimed—"What should prevent our bringing the sofa into the kitchen, and letting him sleep there?"

"Nothing," replied the father; "do so, my

my sweet girl, and let Phœbe assist in your charitable arrangement."

The single sofa the house produced, reached its destined station, and the soldier was early permitted to occupy it. They retired to their beds at the usual hour, and Zitella, tired by her long walk, soon sunk into profound repose.

The dawn of morning in her uncurtained window, proclaimed its arrival, and our orphan rose to seek the hour; but upon examining her watch, found that the fatigue of the last evening had so overpowered her senses, that she had forgotten to wind it up; the monitor of time had consequently gone down, and pointed to a wrong hour; but as she thought she distinguished voices, she rose, and dressing herself, proceeded down the stairs; in descending, she believed, with surprise, that the voice of Flora saluted her ear from the kitchen, which had been converted into a temporary lodging-room for the

mendicant; she listened, and was satisfied in not being mistaken—spontaneously she turned the lock, and she beheld what almost petrified her.

Flora fondly encircled in the arms of the soldier, with her head quietly reposing on his breast! An involuntary shriek from the terrified girl, first aroused their attention; for so wholly were they engrossed by each other, that they had neither seen or heard her approach.

"Gracious God, Miss Edgeworth! what am I to think?"

"That we will never, never more be separated," she sobbed forth; "never—no, *never* will I be again torn from these arms!"

"Oh, Flora! my beloved Flora——"

But the conclusion of the sentence was arrested—Lord Edgeworth stood before them, summoned by the scream of Zitella.

To pourtray the group, is beyond the scope of my abilities—the shade had fallen from

from the eyes of the tattered drummer—"Edgeworth, oh, my husband! my adored husband!"

But the soul of Edgeworth appeared beyond the call of his frantic wife, for at the utterance of the first word, he had fallen senseless upon the ground.

The beautiful Asiatic then threw herself beside him—she wrung her hands in all the agony of grief—"Oh thou idol of my soul! my own, my wedded Lord! behold thy faithful, miserable Alzira! Edward, hear me—oh hear my supplications! Flora, my child, kneel with me."

But violent convulsions writhed the limbs of the insensate Viscount; his lips assumed the livid hue of death, as Gregory and Phœbe now entered. The clock had not yet struck five; but astonished at a noise so unprecedented in their quiet dwelling, they had hastened down to learn the cause, and witnessed the scene we have faintly sketched.

The frantic Lady Edgeworth was not to

be removed but by force; this, however, being at length accomplished, and placed with her daughter in the only sitting-room in use, they returned to that where the poor sufferer yet lay extended.

All the means within their power for his restoration, were long used in vain; and Zitella, who had never before witnessed the havoc of this dreadful malady, beheld with horror its effects. As reason again dawned upon the invalid, imperfect sentences escaped from his lips, his eyes glanced fearfully around, as if in search of some object, and pressing his hand on his forehead, he exclaimed—"Alzira! I thought I had beheld her once more—but it was a dream, the fancy of a perturbed spirit."

Zitella motioned for the domestics to retire, then, in a low voice, and with cautious hesitation, rejoined—"No, my Lord; I believe in reality you might possibly have seen Lady Edgeworth."

"No, no—you know not all—we are parted

parted never to reunite ! she will never appear *here!* Oh God ! why was this phantom of imagination conjured, but to renew the agonies of my already broken heart? Alzira, still, still you pursue me, and rouse the secret anguish of my soul to yet more horrid excess !"

" Be composed, my Lord ; disdain these reflections, for indeed you are in no state to encounter them."

" Encounter what ? speak, Zitella, speak—what must I encounter ? what thought—tell me, on your life, what have I uttered, for my head is strangely disordered ?" and he grasped tightly her hand.

" Nothing, my Lord—believe me, nothing *explanatory.*"

The agonizing anxiety which had a moment before marked the countenance of Edgeworth, seemed tranquillized by this assurance ; being reiterated in yet more decisive language, again he pressed

his clasped hands to his burning forehead, and for many minutes continued buried in profound silence, then abruptly exclaimed—" Remembrance now disperses the doubtful film—it was no dream, no waking vision of the mind; yes, I feel I did behold her once again. Tell me, Zitella, if you value my peace, my reason, tell me truly and decisively, is Lady Edgeworth in this house ?"

" Yes, my Lord, she was—she still is."

" Oh, God of Heaven !" ejaculated the distracted husband, " grant me fortitude to support my fate, to sustain this accumulated suffering !"

Then, suddenly starting from the sofa on which he had till then reclined, in breathless accents he exclaimed—" My child, my child ! Flora, where is my Flora ?"

Zitella hesitated—" I will seek Miss Edgeworth, my dear Sir, and bring her to you."

" No, no, tell me where she is ? where she

she has been? yes, I read the answer in your countenance; she is with her—mother!"

He relinquished with impetuosity the hand of our heroine, which had hitherto been energetically grasped, and precipitately rushed from the room, while the trembling orphan, affrighted at his wild demeanour, and dreading some fatal catastrophe, with irresistible impulse followed his steps, with the vain hope of drawing him back; but it was too late, his speed outstripped her efforts, and he had entered that apartment where the interesting mother was weeping on the bosom of her child.

He staggered as he approached them, his whole frame was agitated, and the ashy paleness of his countenance was momentarily superseded by a fevered flush; yet with a manner that evinced a resolution of import dreadful, yet inflexible, nerved on by strong exertion, repeated

—" Flora, retire; *your father commands it.*"

" I cannot—I will not leave my mother," sobbed Flora; " if you are cruel and inhuman, I at least will comfort her."

Lord Edgeworth pressed forward, he caught up the affectionate girl in his arms with sudden effort; but his returning strength was not equal to the exertion, he staggered beneath the weight, while she struggled for freedom; the contest was momentary, he relinquished the attempt, every feature was convulsed with mental agony; at length he articulated—" Alzira, obey me for the last time—quit this spot *alone*, and follow me."

Lady Edgeworth rose—" Yes, my beloved, now, and ever will I obey you—suffer me, oh! do but suffer me, my adored Edward, to remain——"

" Hush, Alzira, hush, or you will drive me mad." He waved his hand to direct the way; with trembling tottering step, the beautiful

beautiful intruder followed—they entered the closet we have before noticed, and the door was closed.

Zitella attempted to console the afflicted Flora, but vain were all her efforts; she sunk into a chair, and covering her face with her handkerchief, yielded to the bitterest lamentation.

Minute succeeded minute, when a melancholy pause was broken by a wild and horrid shriek! Flora started from her seat, exclaiming—"To the closet! to the fatal closet! fly, Zitella, it is the shriek of my mother!"

Regardless of ought, save the impulse of terror, the mandate of Flora was obeyed, and as she turned the lock of the door with fearful dread, Zitella followed her directing course. Lady Edgeworth stood before them as if transfixed; her cheeks, her lips were bloodless; her eyes rivetted, yet void of speculation, seemed to gaze on sightless vacancy! The face of the mysterious Edgeworth was covered with

his hands; his frame writhed beneath a shivering convulsion, and groans, deep, awful, and impressive, alone broke the appalling silence which reigned.

The young spectators, seized with an indefinable sensation, amounting to almost chilling horror, of they knew not what, gazed fearfully around, to discover, if possible, the cause which could have operated this effect; for that some cause did here exist, appeared most certain, or wherefore had the mysterious closet been, until now, secured from the eye of accident or curiosity? wherefore selected, at this moment, for a solemn interview? and why the appalling appearance, which seemed to result as if from some powerful and sudden source? All had hitherto been darkly obscure, nor had mortal yet raised that veil which covered the actions of this most extraordinary character, for like that of the Egyptian divinity, it defied public scrutiny.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

——————Straight her form
Was turn'd to terror; ruin fill'd her eye,
And her proud step appear'd to awe the world;
When check'd, as thro' an impotence of rage,
Damp sadness soon usurp'd upon her brow,
And the big tear roll'd graceful down her visage.

BROOKE.

But angry lightning from Venusia's eye
Pierc'd his pale form—he could not speak or sigh;
Down his wan cheek the tears of anguish stole,
And spoke the deep distresses of his soul.

HAYLEY.

Wedded Mysteries.

THE bosom of Lady Edgeworth again heaved, and her lovely form fell at the feet of her husband in kneeling supplica-

tion; for, engrossed by one idea, she noted not the entrance of the appalled Zitella—" Edward, hear me—save me from maddening destruction! I cannot support your cruelty—nature sinks beneath the agonizing weight!"

" Cruelty, Alzira!" exclaimed Edgeworth, and his eyes were studiously averted, as if they dared not rest on the form of his kneeling wife.

" Yes, cruelty the most inhuman. Oh, Edward, Edward! had the warm fire of pure and sacred love, which glows in this bosom, lighted a reciprocal flame in your's; did it burn with half as steady, as overpowering influence, Alzira would in your arms yet find an asylum of bliss!"

" Never, never!" ejaculated Edgeworth. " Oh wife of my affections, idol of my early, my only love, on this bosom thou must no longer rest! these arms cannot shelter thee—away, away! leave me to anguish, and take a last, eternal farewell,

of

of the fond pledge of our early bliss—for here I swear——"

"Swear not, my Lord," said the Viscountess, rising, with dignified command over her rebellious feelings, that diffused into her lovely figure a majesty of grace, which awed even the childish Flora; "swear not," she repeated, with firm articulation; "it now were a needless vow, for never again shall Alzira sue for your protecting love! Her proud spirit ill knows the language of supplication; yet for my child, my lofty unbending nature bowed to humiliation—humiliation to the husband of its ardent affections—to the father of my offspring! Edgeworth, from you I least expected, least deserved such cruelty—cruelty unparalleled. My soul glows with indignation—my heart is proud as thine, and it now bids thee a *voluntary* farewell—fear not, thy presence will never more be invaded by a deserted wife!"

She gave one parting embrace to her weeping child; tears then softened the haughty

haughty fire of her eyes; yet her dignity yielded not even at this distressing moment; but her features were pregnant with desperation, as she cast a last look on the agitated Edgeworth, whose eyes were raised to Heaven, expressive of all the wildness of grief—his lips moved, but no sound was audible.

Flora wept aloud, and attempted to pursue her mother; this action aroused Edgeworth, and, forcibly detaining her, he attempted to address Zitella; but articulation was superseded by the strength of his emotion, and he expressively motioned with his hand, to request she would follow Lady Edgeworth.

Our heroine obeyed; the unfortunate wife and mother had retreated some steps from the fatal closet, and now rested against the balustrade of the hall, as if overpowered by the suppression of her own acute feelings.

Zitella, with respectful tenderness, placed her hand within her arm, and requested

quested the wretched Alzira to retire to her own chamber, until recovered composure should enable her to prosecute her intention of quitting Heath House.

Lady Edgeworth answered not, and although she suffered Zitella to assist her up the stairs, she seemed scarcely sensible of her own movements. She seated herself in silence; her countenance breathed a complicated inexplicable expression of the secret conflict of her soul, and seemed but to encrease the fearful mystery which overhung the separation of this noble pair. A firmness, that had apparently arisen from the haughty ebullition of an indignant heart, next succeeded, and with steady voice, she requested the use of the implements for writing, which lay on a table in our heroine's apartment.

A ready assent being granted, she wrote a few lines on a sheet of paper, and then prepared to unclasp from her neck a small gold chain, from which a miniature was suspended, hitherto concealed from view.

view. She fixed her eyes for some moments on the portrait; Zitella saw that they were filled with tears, yet not a sigh escaped her panting bosom; she pressed the pictured resemblance to her quivering lips; but the hour of irresolution was past, and the ivory memento was enclosed in the hasty billet, and sealed with a determined hand; yet, had the writing of the superscription been analized, it would have borne indubitable traits of a more than agitated hand. She gave it to our orphan, with that mingled majesty and urbanity of manner, which no event could annihilate—"Lady Zitella, I confide to your care this small packet; deliver it to your guardian; and if you would be the friend of his wretched wife, make no observation on the past scene—in solitude let him peruse the parting words of the deserted Alzira!"

Our orphan promised exactitude of compliance, and Lady Edgeworth pressed her hand, as she, in a hurried voice, repeated—"This granted, I must no longer delay,

delay, for I feel sunk, debased, by the humiliation to which I have already subjected myself, in clandestinely entering the present mansion of Lord Edgeworth, and not even maternal love could influence me now to remain!"

Zitella offered to dispatch a servant for a carriage, to convey her Ladyship whither she intended to proceed; but the Viscountess declined the proposal; and having expressed a wish that her departure might be effected unknown to the other inhabitants of Heath House, she declared her intention of returning to the next village on foot, where she had obtained the metamorphosing habiliments, in the same garb, by which means she might still avoid its being publicly known, that Lady Edgeworth had embraced the ignoble subterfuge of deception, to gain entrance beneath the roof of her wedded Lord.

The indisposition of the Viscount for several days, induced Zitella to delay the delivery of the packet committed to her care;

care; but as soon as returning health permitted, she, with no little trepidation, put it into his hands.

The small remains of colour faded from his cheek, as his eyes glanced over the superscription; but the agonies he had so recently suffered had exhausted him, and had now given place to a touching melancholy, that deeply interested—"I can guess the contents of this paper, my dear Zitella; but I dare not yet venture to break the seal—the image of my adored Alzira at my feet imploring, and in vain, to me, is a picture that no time can efface! Could you but view the fatal cause of all, engraven on this aching heart—ah! my young friend, how much would you pity, how greatly sympathize!—but I must fly the subject—I cannot banish reflection, but it is yet in my power to be silent." He pressed the packet to his heart, and suddenly rising, abruptly left the room.

The limited period for the visit of our heroine had now expired, and with infinite delight,

delight, she prepared to quit a spot so replete with all that could render life a burden. A letter from Mr. Nugent, announced the intention of her old friend Dr. Moreland, to accompany his niece to London the following week, and as he knew how great would be the gratification to each, he had anticipated her approbation of his scheme, that the good Doctor should take her under his protection, as Heath House was not very far out of the direct road; and that, under the peculiar circumstances of her present situation, it would be better every arrangement should be made, to preclude the necessity of detention, as she would of course take the vacant seat with her friends, and the servant could follow with her wardrobe in a hired chaise.

Zitella was much delighted at the prospect of seeing her respected friend Dr. Moreland, and the anticipation of the coming journey; she therefore gave a willing assent to the arrangement, although

it

it necessarily detained her some days longer at Heath House.

The day, the joyful day at length arrived; a chaise from the next village attended, the trunks were lashed on, and the harnessed horses being placed in the stable, waited the coming of the travellers.

Punctual to the appointed hour, she beheld the chariot of Dr. Moreland approach; but as Lord Edgeworth had pled indisposition as an apology for absence, only herself and Flora greeted the visitors.

The worthy Doctor was overjoyed to meet his young favourite, and our heroine felt infinite pleasure in conversing once more with a cheerful and entertaining companion; while innumerable were the interrogations of anxious interest she tendered concerning the venerable Mrs. Mulgrave, and many the kind enquiries after the wife of her good friend.

Miss Clifden was about fourteen, and had once, some years before, been known to our heroine; she was now on her way to the

the metropolis, after a vacation spent at Sudley Hall, from a fashionable seminary, or, in old-fashioned language, a finishing school.

Breakfast dispatched, the carriages drew up; and our orphan, having taken a kind leave of the unfortunate Viscount, and an affectionate one of his daughter, drove off from Heath House, with a lighter heart than she had felt for many weeks.

As the Doctor's time was limited, they made long stages, and, adding another pair of horses to each carriage, arrived in town that night; as it was, however, late, the Doctor declined alighting; and promising to call on Lady Zitella before he quitted London, he delivered up one precious charge, and then proceeded to his own abode with the other.

Being informed her uncle was not at home, but that Mrs. Nugent was in her dressing-room, Zitella proceeded to seek her.

The surprise of our heroine was, however,

ever, great, when on entering, she beheld the heretofore invariably vivacious Fanny sitting in a neglected dress, her cheeks streaming with tears, and her whole appearance that of affliction—"I fear I intrude," said our orphan, hesitatingly.

"Indeed you do not," replied Mrs. Nugent, embracing her with genuine warmth; and then resting her head on the shoulder of Zitella, renewed her sobs, as she almost inarticulately exclaimed—"Oh, my dear niece, comfort my poor heart, for it is quite, quite broken!"

Our orphan, really interested for the amiable, but ill-assorted wife, led her towards an Eastern cushion, and, seating herself beside the mourner, affectionately enquired her cause of distress.

"My husband, my husband!" sobbed Fanny.

"Heavens! is my uncle then ill?" said Zitella; "I understood he was abroad, and never even received the slightest intimation of his being indisposed."

"Oh

"Oh no, he is not ill, he is well—it is only his Fanny he renders ill."

"How? my dear Mrs. Nugent, how?"

"How! oh, Zitella, how, indeed, has he become so changed a man since you went away; and, indeed, for no reason at all; and yet I now never see him, sometimes from day's end to day's end; and when I could not help complaining of his unkindness and neglect, he looked so cold upon me, and said, he did not know what I would require—that he was already the laugh of every body, and that he had brought shame and disgrace upon himself by his marriage. And, indeed," added Fanny, with infinite simplicity, "there was no truth in the accusation, for I have been a good and honest wife to him; and though all the great gentlemen tell me how beautiful I am, and make all kinds of love to me, I never give them any sort of encouragement; and I tell them all, I value my virtue above all price: however, I began to think that it was only a jealous tantrum

tantrum of Hubby, which I have known him to have when we were first married, so I endeavoured to pacify him, and I cried a great deal; and so then, when he saw me take on so sadly, he almost cried too, and he said it was cruel of him, and that he did not intend to hurt me, and that he would not give me up for the world; but that he was passionate, and said many things in haste he did not mean at all; and that Lady Darnford, that wicked bitter woman, was always goading him to madness, and that she had just been tormenting him; and he kissed me again and again, and he told me not to mind what he had said, for he meant nothing by it; and so I was quite content for a while; but then he went out again, and I never saw him till day-break the next morning, and then he seemed quite flushed with wine; and when I cried, and took on terribly, he spoke quite quick again, and told me he was in no humour to bear my reproaches; and indeed, Sir Edward Horton

Horton told me the very next day, that he had the same night lost thousands and thousands, at Lady Ann Leigh's; that he was for ever at her house; and seeing how much I was grieved to hear it, he would not tell me all he thought; and he was so kind and so soothing—and he said, if he had such a wife, he would not forsake her for any Lady Ann's."

"Do not heed him, for Heaven's sake!" interrupted our heroine, who dreaded the effects of this insidious information, and offers at consolation; "he is a man on whose veracity you must not rely."

Fanny looked incredulous, and vain was every effort of our orphan to guard her against the hypocritical baronet.

"Well," she resumed, somewhat impatiently, "but you have not heard the worst—you must know, that good farmer Dobbins of Yorkshire was quite a father to me, when I was a poor ragged child, without a friend of any sort; and when I came back to England, I got my maid to

write him a letter for me, as I could not do it cleverly myself, to say I was come back from the Indies, and I sent him a present I thought he would like, for remembrance sake; well, this morning I got a letter from himself, to say he is coming up to London on business, and that he should soon see me; and I was so happy and so glad; and I begged Hubby to let me ask him to come and stay in the house, as long as ever he could stay away from his farm; and, do you know, Zitella, he did indeed refuse me," and the tears again flowed down her cheeks; "and when I told him how good he was to me when I used to drive his pigs to market, and how kind and considerate, and all that, why, he only wished him at the devil, and swore a dreadful oath, that he should not come within his doors, for that Lady Darnford had teazed him enough about farmer Dobbins, and the cursed pigs—yes, indeed, he cursed even the poor harmless pigs, and he raved about the room like a bedlamite;

lamite; and he is gone now, I don't know where; and nothing I could say would he hear, about asking my old friend, kind farmer Dobbins, on a visit, and just to shew him all the fine sights in London, as he has never been here before in his life, as he says in his letter; and I thought it would be but grateful and proper, to do all I could to please him; and I could let him ride about all day, you know, in the carriage, which he loves to his heart; but, indeed, I think it is very cruel and unkind, and unnatural, in Hubby, to treat him so; I am sure I never behaved so to any of his friends or his kin, but was always civil and obliging to them, out of love for him; but do you know, niece, for it is a real truth, he actually wished good farmer Dobbins at the devil! and not to bring the clown near where he was—only think of calling farmer Dobbins a clown!"

Zitella endeavoured to soften the resentment of Fanny; for she was fully aware that pride alone was the barrier op-

posed to the admission of farmer Dobbins beneath the splendid roof of the nabob; and she justly, though with pain, apprehended, that an attachment which, in its zenith, was exclusively personal, had now nearly arrived at its extinction, while, with the annihilation of this weak preference, she feared that the happiness of the newly-elevated cottager would cease, and that the time would yet arrive, when, decorated with the splendid trappings of a nabob's wife, and surrounded by the luxuries of higher life, she might yet regret the tranquil moments she enjoyed when, in contented ignorance, she tended the humble animals of her guardian friend.

Having succeeded, in some measure, to sooth the warm heart of the weeping Fanny, Zitella retired to her own apartment, and, throwing herself into a chair, began to make preparations for bed; but observing that her night-clothes were not in the usual place, she called to her maid,

whom

whom she heard in the adjoining dressing-room, to remind her of the omission; but what was her astonishment and consternation, when the summons was obeyed, instead of the person she expected, she beheld Flora Edgeworth!

"Do not be angry, my dear Lady Zitella; but, indeed, I could not help it: I love my father very much, for I believe he is a very good man—but I love my mother better, and I am determined to live with her, and never to leave her more; so I will tell you how cleverly I managed. My dear mother, you know, heard me say I had but one shilling in the world, and so, before we parted, she gave me this beautiful purse, filled with guineas; and though I told her I had no means of spending them, she desired me to keep them, in case I should; and this, I believe, put it into my head to determine upon coming up to London; and I made a confidant of Mrs. Davis, your maid, and I promised to give her a very handsome present, if she

would help me; and we contrived it all remarkably well, for she was to go, you know, in the hired chaise, as you went with the Doctor and his niece, Miss Clifden; therefore, with very little alteration in Mrs Davis's pelisse, it was made to fit me, and I put on her large slouch bonnet and a veil, and nobody suspected me, and here I am."

The astonishment of our heroine had been so great, that not even an attempt had been made to interrupt the narrative of the unthinking Flora; but the moment she ceased to speak, Zitella could not resist upbraiding her with the cruelty of this conduct to her father.

"Oh no," replied Flora, "I wrote him a letter, which I left on my table, and told him all my scheme, and that I had cheated you as well as himself."

Zitella at this moment hearing the voice of her uncle in the hall, as just returned from an evening party, went down to impart the painful circumstance which had taken

taken place in the elopement from Heath House.

It was agreed to prevent the little fugitive from any interview with her mother, until the pleasure of the Viscount could be made known; and, in the interim, to relieve his feelings as much as possible, an express was ordered to depart at four the next morning, with a letter, announcing the safety of Miss Edgeworth, and their arrangements on her behalf.

This point adjusted, Flora was placed in a chamber adjoining that of our heroine, and the family all retired to bed; but the untoward incidents of the evening had effectually banished sleep from the eyes of our orphan; nor until the hour when the express was actually on the road to Heath House, did she sink into that repose she had so long in vain solicited.

The travellers were permitted to indulge to an hour unusually late for either, when Zitella was awakened by exclamations, in the voice of Mrs. Nugent's Abigail, who

appeared at her bedside with a paper in her hand—"Miss Edgeworth is gone, my Lady! gone clear off, I assure you!"

"Gone!" re-echoed her alarmed auditor; "gone where?"

"Nay, my Lady, I am not in the secret—but this paper will probably inform your Ladyship."

Zitella caught the paper from her hand, and read as follows:

"I AM sorry to distress you, my dear Lady Zitella, but, as I told you before, I could not help it—ere this reaches you, I shall be with my mother, for Davis and I had settled all that before I left home—she was in London as soon as we were; and at six o'clock this morning she promised me to be ready, and to come for me in a hackney-coach—the carriage is now waiting three doors off; but none of the family are yet up, and I dare not go down

down until they are; as soon as I hear them moving about, I shall open the door, steal out, and be off in a minute; for I know you will be as good as your word, and keep me confined till my father arrives; and this I was sure of, even before you told me so, and that was the reason I laid my plan with Mrs. Davis before we parted. I have promised to keep her as my own maid, for she says you will never receive her again, she is certain; and I have told her that my dear mother will amply reward her for assisting me, besides all that I have given her: so farewell, my dear Lady Zitella, and think as favourably as you can, of

Your affectionate

FLORA EDGEWORTH."

"What is the other prayer," enquired our heroine, "that remains in your hands?"

"Oh! that's a note, my Lady, brought

by a servant half an hour ago," and she presented the following lines:

"Miss Edgeworth wishes to inform her friend, Lady Zitella Herbert, who may be anxious for her safety, that she is under the protection, and in the arms of her mother."

Our orphan hastily arose, and being soon dressed, sought her uncle, into whose hands she placed both letters. He paused awhile for consideration, and at length determined on going to Lady Edgeworth, and endeavouring, by every means in his power, to induce the little Flora's return to her father; but on reaching the house of the Viscountess, he was informed that Lady Edgeworth and her daughter had quitted town two hours before in a hired carriage,

carriage, and had taken no servant with them, but Davis, Miss Edgeworth's new Abigail; nor was there any clue by which to trace their route.

A second message was now dispatched to the Viscount, with this additional intelligence; he fortunately encountered his Lordship, travelling rapidly towards London; but receiving the latter information, he prepared to start into a cross road, and take another direction than towards the metropolis, where his search was now proclaimed futile. A few hasty, and almost incoherent lines, were returned by the courier, intimating his intention to pursue, and, if possible, regain the fugitive; while, in the interim of his uncertain absence from Heath House, he consigned our heroine wholly to the direction of her other guardian, and relative protector, Mr. Nugent.

Some weeks rolled on, and with pain our orphan perceived, that the tale of Fanny, in regard to the indifference and

neglect of Nugent, was fully correct; he was now scarcely ever seen at the family board, nor accompanied his wife, as heretofore, in the engagements of the evening —he was now, in truth, a mere fashionable husband; while the effect of his altered conduct was perceptible, in the weakened attachment of Mrs. Nugent, whose vanity was daily flattered by the encreasing homage of the opposite sex, who are ever ready to accord devotion to a neglected, young, and beautiful wife, and supply, by the attentions of gallantry, those which are withheld by a legitimate protector.

Of Lord Edgeworth, no tidings had been obtained; neither was any further light thrown on the present residence of the Viscountess and her daughter.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

" I, under pretence of friendly ends,
And well-plac'd words of glazing courtesy,
Wind me into the easy-hearted man,
And hug him into snares."

.....

" My tongue hath but a heavier tale to say."

An old Acquaintance.

It was one morning in the successive week, that our heroine was surprised by a second letter from the George Milford, of opera-house memory; its contents were distressing, and couched in language calculated to reach the compassionate heart of our heroine. They intimated, that the man in whose hands that sum had been lodged, which

which her bounty some time before advanced, to aid himself and unfortunate family, had failed, and the money was consequently sunk; and unless three hundred pounds was instantly paid, the public situation it had been devoted to the purchase of, would be lost; and his person conveyed to a prison, to pay the sum for which he was under arrest.

Zitella hesitated in what manner to act; but at length considering, that a sum which might materially benefit him, could not be of serious inconvenience to herself, and that it were better to encounter the danger of extending aid to imprudence and credulity, which appeared to have been the cause of the present distress of Mr. Milford, than perhaps really to suffer a husband and father to be deprived of future ability to support his wife and family, by the captivity attendant upon an unfortunate debtor, she finally resolved to extend renewed pecuniary assistance; but her purse was at present in a state that needed

needed replenishing, and she was therefore obliged to defer her charitable intentions until the following day, when she was to receive a considerable sum from her banker, for the discharge of some debts, incurred since her residence in town; she, however, did not delay replying to the letter of Milford, and mentioned her intentions for the morrow.

Mr. Nugent accompanied his ward on this expedition to the house of her banker, and on their return, having some business of his own to transact, he requested to be set down near the New Church in the Strand; this being effected, our heroine proceeded home.

She had just reached the corner of Park-lane, when the carriage was stopt by a beautiful boy, about fourteen, who presented himself, and, respectfully bowing, handed a note to her Ladyship. Somewhat surprised, she broke the seal, and read as follows:

"AN

"An affair to us of infinite importance, has induced me to take the liberty of addressing your Ladyship—in attempting to reach your house this morning, my husband has encountered an accident of an alarming nature; but as it has arisen from a circumstance connected with the welfare of your Ladyship, he is extremely anxious that no delay take place in the communication. I would in person have had the honour of waiting upon you, but such is the present situation of my husband, that I dare not leave him even for an hour; and therefore presume to solicit an interview of a few minutes, trusting, my Lady, to your knowledge of the cause of this liberty, to plead my apology for offering it.

"The bearer is my son, who attends your commands, and will repeat whatever reply you may vouchsafe to afford, to, Madam, with the truest respect and gratitude, your Ladyship's very devoted servant,

JANE MILFORD."

Zitella,

Zitella, turning to the lad, enquired if he was the son of Mr. Milford?

He modestly replied in the affirmative.

"How far is your residence from this place?" was the next interrogatory.

"About half a mile," was the answer.

"Of what nature is the business upon which an interview with me is requested?"

The eyes of the boy were cast upon the ground, his breast heaved with emotion, as, turning his head aside, he drew his handkerchief across his face, and in scarcely articulate accents, replied, he was not acquainted with all the particulars, but he knew enough to assure her Ladyship, that a matter of infinite moment to herself, had just reached the knowledge of his father, and that, in order to avert impending evil, it was absolutely necessary she should be apprized under what form it would appear.

Astonished at so strange an incident, our orphan for a moment hesitated; she enquired

enquired if Mrs. Nugent was at home, and finding she was not, desired the boy to ascend the carriage, and give the servants directions to his father's place of abode.

They were set down at the entrance of a small court, which refused admittance to an equipage of the construction of that of our heroine; she therefore desired her attendants to wait, and followed the young guide into the third house.

The dinner summons having convened Mr. and Mrs. Nugent, with three invited guests, to the always magnificent board of the nabob, the non-appearance of Lady Zitella Herbert was with surprise observed, and a servant dispatched to inform her Ladyship that the table waited. The party were, however, a little startled, at hearing that the carriage had not yet returned her from a morning drive; as she had hitherto been remarkably observant of domestic arrangements, a circumstance so uncommon created alarm; but when two hours more

more had elapsed, apprehensions of a most serious nature found entrance in the bosom of her friends.

Mr. Nugent, apologizing to his guests, prepared himself to go in search of the fugitive; but just as he was about to quit the house, the empty carriage of Lady Zitella Herbert stopt at the door; in reply to his anxious inquiries, the servants informed him of the rencontre of the boy, and the note; of their having conveyed their Lady and her *protegé* to the court where they had alighted, and waited for many hours her Ladyship's return; but being at length alarmed, by an absence protracted, they conceived, beyond all reasonable bounds, the footman ventured to approach the door to make enquiries, but all appeals to the bell remained unanswered, and in despair of being attended to, they had driven home to make their report.

Mr. Nugent's alarm was now considerably encreased, and taking with him a third

servant,

servant, he got into the carriage, and was driven to the court; finding his violent and repeated knocks unnoticed, he ordered the door to be burst open, and entering the house, found it completely empty, not only of furniture, but apparently of inhabitants!

Terrors now of the most horrid nature assailed him; he well remembered the sum of money his ward had that morning received, and he feared each moment to encounter her lifeless remains, in one of the dark rooms of this abode of infamy. He ran, in fearful apprehension, from room to room, until, having in vain searched the upper stories, he again reached the ground-floor, when, in attempting to open one of the doors, he found it locked; force was applied, and bursting it from off the hinges, he entered, and beheld Zitella senseless upon the floor, with her hands tied!

Unprepared with restoratives, it was some time ere returning life soothed his alarms;

alarms; but when it did, hysteric sobs alone proclaimed her alive to circumstance; she refused to afford the smallest clue to the extraordinary circumstances under which she had been discovered, and in this state she was conveyed home.

On being carried to her chamber, she was placed in bed, and a physician summoned; in the interim, Mrs. Nugent having been informed of her situation, immediately rushed into the room.

"The Lord be good unto me!" she exclaimed, "what can have happened to you? do, my dear niece, inform me. What adventures befel you in the haunted house? did you see more than one ghost, and what did he look like? was he black? and had he a tail, and horns, and claws? and was he wrapt in flames of fire, or in darkness? do tell me all about it."

Zitella faintly ejaculated, "No, my dear Madam, he wore no outward signs, such as you describe."

"What,

"What, did he appear then as a large cat, or a dog?"

"Neither," added the former.

"Lord love ye," continued the tormenting Fanny, "now I know the whole matter—now I can make it all out, and understand it every bit to a nicety. Ah! if I had but employed my own senses before, I might have guessed it in a minute."

"Indeed!" ejaculated the invalid; "then, my dear Mrs. Nugent, why did you not extend a friendly warning?"

"Why, I did warn you; didn't I tell Hubby that I never would go where she was?—and was not that warning enough?"

"She! whom do you mean?"

"Who! why, that old witch, that '*evil genius*,' as Mr. Nugent called her, that old Lady Darnford, to be sure."

A faint smile passed over the features of Lady Zitella, as she shook her head. The entrance of the physician dismissed the superfluous attendants; and having

declared the illness of the patient originated in a violent affection of the spirits, ordered some ounces of blood to be taken, and a composing draught administered without delay.

While these prescriptions are accomplished, we will quit the invalid's chamber, and resume the thread of our narrative, at the portal of the house where the younger Milford and Lady Zitella Herbert had entered. The street door being closed, the latter followed her guide to the room, where we have recently discovered her, the door of which was also instantly locked; the boy drew from his head a dark wig, and, by so doing, shook over his shoulders long flaxen tresses, while, bursting into a loud fit of laughter, he exclaimed—"Walk out, most noble Mr. Milford, your prize is secure; and now, pray, give the promised reward to your *honest* friend Jane."

At this moment, from an adjoining room, issued

issued the very Milford she had expected, but certainly not with the accompanying pistol, which he now presented to her breast, while he demanded the instant surrender of her purse, and every other valuable article that was transferrable.

The horror of our orphan may easily be imagined; but if not, we cannot attempt to delineate it, for she felt fully convinced of her defenceless situation; and aware that villany, such as she had now experienced, was equal to the commission of any crime, with trembling hands she drew forth the required sacrifices, and placed them in those of Milford, who, in an ironical tone, repeated--"You are *rich*, you know, and I want a little of your superfluous cash; an *heiress*, such as you are, can feel no inconvenience from so trifling a loss."

The spirits of Zitella rallied at this merciless insult—"The hand of *the heiress*, Mr. Milford, has not been niggard in boons

to

to *you;* the benevolent motive you must feel, could only originate from the purest source."

"That is a matter of doubt," he coolly replied.

"Of doubt!" re-echoed the astonished girl.

"Why, yes, of *doubt;* if you had been less diffident of yourself, of your own discrimination, penetration, judgment, or whatever else you may be pleased to call it, you would not have so implicitly relied upon *self.* How should an ignorant country girl of eighteen, or perhaps nineteen, have acquired sufficient knowledge of mankind to cope with them? the *benevolence* you proudly boast, was *indiscriminate profusion;* you took no trouble to investigate the real pretensions of the claimant upon your charity; your liberality was extended, to gratify the impulse of the moment, not from conviction of the merit of the object upon whom it was lavished—I am but a mere adventurer, my

fair prize; and this little son of mine, a kind girl, who amuses my leisure hours; under different characters, we levy contributions on the public, and now and then meet a dupe as credulous as the Herbert heiress: but I have expended quite as much time as my safety will admit, in giving you a lesson of *humility*, so here is a bible; and although I do not place much reliance upon it myself, it is to be hoped you do; therefore swear, that not one syllable respecting this affair shall pass your lips for twenty-four hours—*swear*," he continued, "or I must really send you to keep company with Hamlet's grimly ghost; at the end of that period, you may amuse your friends, and entertain all the brats of your acquaintance, with the wonders of the Milford tale, as we shall ere that be removed from your resentment."

The terrified Zitella took the oath enjoined.

"But," continued he, in a theatrical tone,

"We'll

"We'll make assurance doubly sure."

"Cross your hands, my fair lady, while Jane's new garters fetter them from doing us mischief."

In vain the poor orphan pled, in vain offered every solemn asseveration, not to betray them; they laughed at her terrors, and having secured her hands, and locked the door, they made off with their ill-gotten booty.

CHAP. VIII.

Ce n'est point par effort qu'on aime,
L'amour est jalouse de ses droits ;
Il ne depend que de lui meme,
On l'oblient que par son choix.
Tout reconnoit sa loi supreme ;
Lui seul reconnoit point de loi.

JEAN BAPTISTE ROUSSEAU.

O thou eternal Power, whose piercing eye
Discerns each secret guilt, search thou my heart,
And as thou know'st me innocent, support me,
And to the world acquit my blemish'd fame.

PHILLIPS.

Worldly Inferences.

As terror of mind had been the ground of indisposition with Lady Zitella Herbert, she did not continue ill beyond the successive

cessive day; but the cause was soon spread abroad, by means of the voluble Mrs. Nugent, and became the fashionable tale of the hour, a source of amusement to many, but of malicious insinuation to others; while Zitella alone moralized on the chicanery and depravity which had marked the unworthy object of her misapplied bounty.

Three days had elapsed since the memorable morning of the Milford stratagem, when Zitella ordered her carriage to proceed to the house of the Countess of Darnford, whom she had not seen since the incident last mentioned. Upon approaching the room, as the servant announced her, the voice of the dowager saluted her ear, with—"Welcome, fair adventuress, and receive congratulations on your marvellous escape from the dangers of the deserted house."

"Which may serve, as at this moment," added the former, smiling, "for a subject of mirth, but I assure your Ladyship, it

wore a different aspect while I remained a prisoner."

"Advice, Lady Zitella, is seldom acceptable, and therefore I feel inclined to extend it. Speak lightly on this *strange* affair!" and Lady Darnford laid peculiar emphasis on the word strange; "the less it is discussed, the better—the world may not give a charitable construction, in *any* sense, to your acquaintance with this interesting Mr. George Milford."

"What other construction, my Lady," returned our heroine, gravely, "could it bear? I had only recognized him as a married man, and an unfortunate one: my intended visit," she added, as the colour in her cheeks mounted to crimson, "was at the entreaty of his supposed wife."

"Who proved a convenient mistress—'*a kind-hearted girl;*' was not that the gentleman's distinction? What advantages, Lady Zitella, attend being handsome, elegant, interesting, and so forth!—

had

had *poor* Mr. Milford been old and ugly, goutified, rheumatic——"

"He would have been still more an object of my interest," interrupted her Ladyship, haughtily.

"Indeed!" was repeated in a tone of affected surprise. "Well, upon my word, you are the most generous and liberal young woman I have ever encountered in my whole life; what a happy circumstance for the community it is, that the blind goddess for once may disclaim her qualifying title, since, in decreeing you to be an *heiress*, she has placed it in your power to reduce your asserted benevolence to actual demonstration! An hospital, such as a little Greenwich, for instance, will accommodate all those unfortunate old men, the peculiar objects of your Ladyship's bounty; only take care, that as a reward, they may concur in the necessity of shutting you up among the incurables in the neighbourhood of Moorfields."

"I would rather be deemed a charitable

and at worst, it is only purchasing a lesson of circumspection for the future."

"Now, child, if, instead of resting upon your own judgment and discretion, you had condescended to have sought a director, you might have profited by advice; but experience is a dear school, though, I am told, fools will learn in no other. I do not apologize for my blunt application, since you know it is my manner, and all those who associate with me, agree to pay the price demanded; and you are, I believe, among the number of those with whom I am licensed to indulge."

"The bluntness of *candour*, Lady Darnford, I rather approve than dislike—it is *suspicious* distrust alone at which I recoil."

"You are *au fait* at deciphering, my Lady, and mine is doubtless the bluntness of candour, for such you mean to infer, I presume?"

"If your Ladyship allows me the merit of deciphering, I cannot do otherwise than admit, that when you apply it, it is indeed

deed a caustic application, that inflames ere it cures."

"Your metaphor is not inapt; but, to reduce our argument to simple matter of fact, it is necessary to observe, that the vulgar many have already drawn their own conclusions—so far the caustic operates; and as to the healing properties, why, the wealth of *the heiress* will prove a fillet to bind the eyes of the one-half of that world who forms her orbit; and the name of *husband,* which may be soon purchased, will effectually prove a shade for the other."

"A shade, Lady Darnford, '*that follows wealth and fame,*' I despise."

"And yet is very convenient, nevertheless."

"*Convenience,* my Lady, is one of the last recommendations I should regard in the qualifications of a husband."

"Now this is extremely liberal in your Ladyship, for probably that may be a very

and at worst, it is only purchasing a lesson of circumspection for the future."

"Now, child, if, instead of resting upon your own judgment and discretion, you had condescended to have sought a director, you might have profited by advice; but experience is a dear school, though, I am told, fools will learn in no other. I do not apologize for my blunt application, since you know it is my manner, and all those who associate with me, agree to pay the price demanded; and you are, I believe, among the number of those with whom I am licensed to indulge."

"The bluntness of *candour*, Lady Darnford, I rather approve than dislike—it is *suspicious* distrust alone at which I recoil."

"You are *au fait* at deciphering, my Lady, and mine is doubtless the bluntness of candour, for such you mean to infer, I presume?"

"If your Ladyship allows me the merit of deciphering, I cannot do otherwise than admit, that when you apply it, it is indeed

deed a caustic application, that inflames ere it cures."

"Your metaphor is not inapt; but, to reduce our argument to simple matter of fact, it is necessary to observe, that the vulgar many have already drawn their own conclusions—so far the caustic operates; and as to the healing properties, why, the wealth of *the heiress* will prove a fillet to bind the eyes of the one-half of that world who forms her orbit; and the name of *husband,* which may be soon purchased, will effectually prove a shade for the other."

"A shade, Lady Darnford, '*that follows wealth and fame,*' I despise."

"And yet is very convenient, nevertheless."

"*Convenience,* my Lady, is one of the last recommendations I should regard in the qualifications of a husband."

"Now this is extremely liberal in your Ladyship, for probably that may be a very

essential one in his vocabulary, when selecting a wealthy wife."

"Then, Lady Darnford, I fear he will be mistaken in his *arithmetic* of love, and find *interest* no rule to which I am inclined to contribute a *figure*."

"I would present to your observation, my young relative, *practice*, as it is in common use, and the study, I do not doubt, will facilitate the learning of *interest*, since you know it generally precedes it in *numerical pursuits*."

"If such be the opinion of your Ladyship, I have predicted a lesson of utility; but in the matter immediately before us, I should never incline to unite those rules of practice and interest."

"And thus let our truly *figurative* metaphor cease: you will, I predict, profit by the admonition; and to hate the adviser, I grant you fullest liberty."

The entrance of other visitors closed this topic of conversation, and the sight of Clarence

Clarence Molesworth, who formed one of the morning loungers, certainly did even temporarily banish it from the mind of our orphan. The meeting was unexpected by either; and, we must acknowledge, that an involuntary expression of feature accompanied the emotion of surprised pleasure, which our heroine experienced, while the countenance of the invalid flushed with all the animation of delighted gratification; a resistless impulse seemed to direct the attention of each to the other; existing circumstance, in regard to his supposed situation with the daughter of Mrs. Ancaster, was forgotten. A soft joy fluttered around her heart, a joy that bore association with that treasured look which had emanated from the eyes of Molesworth, as they unexpectedly met those of an object, who even yet interested his heart more than reason wished to allow. Those who have never loved, will perhaps conceive it preposterous, nay, unnatural, that an individual who had for so long a

time

time acknowledged the necessity of subjugating a hopeless attachment, or had for so many weeks resorted to absence, as its most effectual antidote, and whose pride and delicacy were alike connected in its concealment, should, from the look of a moment, yield up all her philosophy, and greet his conversation with a smiling attention, resulting from internal happiness; but I would ask her who has selected one beloved object amid creation for the monarch of her heart, whether she has not owned the potent influence of a look, a word, and on this fragile equilibrium, lulled her fears even into transitory happiness? whether she has not spun, from a single thread, extended by the hand of him she regarded, a net to stay the flight of hope, and cage the restless flutterer in her bosom? If our heroine had been sensible of the animated flow of her own language, as she conversed with Clarence Molesworth, on a first interview after an absence she had adopted from prudential motives,

motives, as connected with her future peace, a moment of reflection would have turned the current to a troubled stream; but she was herself too much lost in the gratification of the moment, to observe the spring which actuated the effect.

Among the morning assembly of visitors at the house of Lady Darnford, Sir Horace Lister was the most assiduous in expressing his congratulations on the return of Lady Zitella Herbert; but they passed unheeded by her, accustomed to the affectation of his romantic language, which cast over his weak and unmeaning sentiments the colouring of love, and as such she considered his present attentions, though they served effectually to awaken jealousy in the bosom of the fair Euphemia; but Miss Clairmond was the very nut-brown maid of Prior, nor all the supposed and implied inconstancy of her selected swain, could stay the strength of her avowed passion.

Having thus declared her character, it will not be conceived miraculous, that the eyes

eyes of the love-lorn maid told the tale of jealous fear to those of her favoured Horace; or that he, flattered by the avowed partiality of an admired belle, and subdued by the tender reproach from beauty's potent orbs, once more became the faithful Stephon, to sigh of love in all the hyperbole of visionary guise, at the side of his kind and fair friend.

Lost, or rather wishing to appear so, to all, save her supposed captive, the fashionably romantic Euphemia gradually lowered her accents, and gave the air of an engrossed devoted *tête-à-tête*, to a mere homage of gallantry, tendered by a man who in reality viewed her with indifference, however circumstance operated on his vanity to pay, or, it must be confessed, if we speak candidly, to *receive* the attentions of Miss Clairmond.

The Dowager soon after drew her chair nearer that part of the room in which Molesworth and Zitella were conversing, to whom, in a sarcastic tone, she repeated —"I have

—"I have fallen in love with coquetry, and I come openly to declare my passion."

"That Lady Darnford should avow herself a convert on this ground, does indeed astonish me," was the reply; "for I had really supposed you, like myself, would have exclaimed, that

> "This is a monster of such horrid mien,
> As to be hated, needs but to be seen!"

"Yes, my good Sir; but there are degrees in the monstrous tribe, and I would here award judgment by comparison.—Women is surely more calculated to repeat the passive verb, 'I am loved,' than the active tense; although I allow that fashion is inclined rather to favour the latter than the former: behold, for instance, Miss Clairmond, and tell me candidly, would you not rather prefer her who flies to be pursued, than she who pursues to conquer? would you not own more delicacy in the doubtful smile, which speaks but half,

half, than her who affects even coquettishly to retire from admiration, but to secure her triumph, than the female who, forgetful of her own dignity, breaks down the barrier of propriety, and almost offers herself to the cold embrace of a solicited lover—who haunts a man into love, until weary of the length of the chase, he, in despair, suffers himself to be secured by the animated huntress?"

Molesworth smiled, and it was a smile of meaning—"It is a difficult question, my dear Madam, for a bachelor to answer; but your Ladyship will, I am sure, faithfully keep my secret, when I assert, that I think even a coquette, horrid and despicable as the character appears in my eyes, is preferable to her who forgets what is due to the delicacy of her sex and rank in creation. My fair one, for again I quote,

"Must be woed, and not unsought, be won."

Need we repeat the source of that blush which

which dyed the cheeks of Zitella with a painful roseate blush? need we declare the impulse which prompted her suddenly to turn from Clarence Molesworth, and address Lord Arthur Craven, who happened to be standing near? scarcely a word could the former now extort from her lips; and this sudden, to him inexplicable, change of conduct, threw an additional shade of caprice over the manner of the heiress. The fastidious lover sighed, reason again seized the helm, and once more the parting salutation rested on a cold and formal bow.

The animadversion of Clarence on the conduct of Miss Clairmond, faded not from the mind with the presence of the speaker; it was registered deep in the heart of our orphan; and the conscious sense of humiliation, in the more than gratification, the delight she had felt, in again beholding the supposed lover and destined husband of another, gave an implication to the observation, that was foreign

reign to the thought of Molesworth; the consequence was a reserve, almost amounting to repellance, on the part of Zitella, when chance afforded a successive interview, which occurred at a ball and supper given by Mrs. Nugent in the following week, when the frigid tone and distant manner of our orphan, offended and irritated the heart of Molesworth; and again he dwelt on the coquetry of the heiress, with poignant mortification.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

"Keen glances of censure proceed generally from a dark involved temper, like flashes of lightning from a gloomy sky."

.....

"The ideot wonder they express'd,
Was praise and transport to his breast."

The mal-apropos Visit.

A VERY large party were already assembled in the drawing-rooms of Mrs. Nugent, who, assisted by her young inmate, was endeavouring to offer those attentions to her guests such an occasion demanded. Zitella had been for some moments interested by the conversation of Lord Arthur Craven, whose really good qualities, stimulated by powerful motive, had now began to burst the

the fetters of affected eccentricity; and the present object of his regard had lent a less unwilling ear than usual, to those professions which indicated somewhat more than mere general attention, when they were attracted by a strange and extraordinary noise at the door, as if of persons in contention; the lock suddenly gave way, and a tall stout figure appeared, covered with dust and perspiration, while the skirts of his coat were forcibly held by one of the servants, who appeared to have been in vain endeavouring to prevent the unceremonious *entré!*

"I tell you, puppy, I will see her; she'll be glad to her heart to hear I be come—I say, let me go," and he burst from the hands which had fettered him.

But at this moment, the magnificent apartments, the glare of light, the large assemblage of persons, the glitter of diamonds, in short, the *coup d'œil* had so powerful an effect upon the intruder, that he stood as if transfixed, with open mouth, and

and staring eyes, to the infinite amusement of all near him. A sudden scream of joy from Mrs. Nugent, for a moment diverted attention—" My dear, dear farmer Dobbins!" she exclaimed, running towards him, and throwing herself, *sans ceremonie*, into his arms; " Lord, how delighted I am to see you, you dear, good, old soul!"

" I knew it, I knew it, my dear little Fanny; I was certain sure you would," and the tears rushed down the cheeks of this genuine son of nature.

The mutual recognition past, the company became in turn an object of attention; the broad smile of contempt, the titter of suppressed derision, the gaze of astonishment, now operated upon the feelings of the honest farmer—" Why, to be sure," he exclaimed, surveying himself in a large mirror, " the gentlemen down stairs was right, for they said I had no business here, in this pickle and sweat; for I be but just come; and my over-alls, too, they be a little the worse for the journey; for I thought

thought it was cheaper, and pleasanter, to come a-horseback, than a-top of the coach, and so I rode all the way from home on Venus, the old blind mare—you remember Venus, don't you?"

"Oh yes, very well; many a ride has she given me round and round the orchard, while Giles went behind with a stick in his hand, to see she didn't play me a trick, and throw me over her head; for she was a little more frisky then, than I suppose she is now."

"Why, to be sure," he continued, "she is most done with friskiness, as well as myself; but, as I was going to tell you, I was as pleased as Punch, when I saw the lights was a-burning in all the houses, and the folks were none of 'em gone to bed, though 'twas past eleven o'clock, and so I thought I'd come directly, and see if you was all alive, and kicking, and merry, as you used to be; and so I gave the watchman a shilling to shew me the way—No, thank you, Ma'am," he added, with a scrape

scrape of the foot, to a lady, who had at that moment risen from her chair, from inability to preserve gravity, "keep your seat, though it's very kind and civil of you to offer it; but I shan't sit down here —I an't fit, for I be all of a drip."

Peals of laughter now issued around; and the poor farmer, feeling his situation somewhat awkward, again addressed his friend Fanny—"Well, I'll go down now, and take a mouthful of bread and cheese, and a draught of brown stout, for I be desperate thirsty; and then I'll go to the Nag's Head, where Venus is eating a measure of oats; and to-morrow morning, when these here folks be all gone home—"

"No, my dear farmer," cried the *naif* Fanny, "you shall stay here, that you shall;" and linking her arm within his, she made her exit with him, regardless of the engagements of the evening, or, in fact, of any thing but delight, at the unexpected rencontre of this friend of former days.

The half petrified Zitella had witnessed this scene, with feelings of dread and apprehension, lest her uncle should have been attracted to the spot; but he, deeply engaged at a card-table in the adjoining room, where he had at this moment a considerable sum pending, was wholly ignorant of the passing scene: Lady Darnford, however, was determined he should not long enjoy the bliss of ignorance, for, advancing towards him, with a countenance bearing on its surface all the frigid irony of her nature, or of her habit, she exclaimed—"My dear Sir, I have had a Herculean labour to reach you through this crowd; and yet my anxiety to offer congratulations on the happy incident of the evening, could not be laid by counteracting obstacles."

"I am not so happy," coldly replied Nugent, bowing, "as to be capable of deciphering the hieroglyphic with which your Ladyship honours me."

"No, indeed, I purported no hieroglyphic

phic fancy; my theme is sober reality, and I am most happy in being the first to communicate a felicitous occurrence; for if, as the most renowned of bards affirms,

> "The first bringer of unwelcome news
> Hath but a losing office, and his tongue
> Sounds ever after as a sullen bell,
> Remember'd, tolling a departed friend;"

how much, then, must the messenger of joy, in very contrast gain, when he hails the presence of a benefactor? Quick, therefore, on the wings of thought, I fled to be a happy herald, and am at length arrived to announce the appearance of a mighty personage of immediate interest, high in favour with the partner of thy bosom—'*a second father*,' I think she styled him to me—'a friend of early days—the invaluable *farmer Dobbins, of pig-driving memory!*"

"Farmer Dobbins!" involuntarily exclaimed the agitated Nugent; but as his eyes fixed in astonishment on the Coun-

tess, the malicious expression of her features recalled him to the motive which had actuated the communication, and with bitterness he replied—"I can very readily conceive the satisfaction this occasion has imparted to the breast of your Ladyship; and I am happy to discover, that some pleasantry can yet connect itself with the recollection of *former days,* in which I may be united."

Then, as if fearing to trust himself to the encounter of her Ladyship's retort, he abruptly rose, and requesting Neville, who stood near, to take his cards for a few minutes, retired to seek Fanny and her companion, with a mixture of shame, mortification, and anger, rankling in his breast; but although he thus precluded an answer, he could not escape from the look of petrifying contempt, which emanated from the eyes of the acrimonious Countess.

Nugent felt its force; he was conscious of the unfeeling, ungenerous reflection his lips had uttered, nor could his heart sanction

tion the passionate ebullition of momentary resentment; for he recollected that the sex of Lady Darnford, the once tender affection of the discarded Sophia Howard, should have sheltered her from the cruel oblique his lips had dared breathe to the ear of the Countess of Darnford.

In ten minutes the ill-paired couple re-entered the apartment together; a sullen sort of anger was, for the first time in her life, visible on the features of Fanny, and a kind of complaining murmur yet hung on her coral lips; the brow of the nabob was gloomy and contracted, to which the forced smile he cast over his features, bore no harmonious connexion.

The juniors of the party were, however, now summoned to the ball-room, and this in some measure diverted the general attention from the recent source of entertainment.

Mrs. Nugent led off; and although no fashionably airy step evinced operatic excellence in this exercise of feet, yet her very

lovely form was so singularly attractive in every movement, that it actually threw a veil over the rusticity of her manner, in the execution of a simple figure; and while the females exclaimed at the vulgar violence of the self-fatigued dancers, she footed out the tune with genuine delight, to the very utmost of her power; yet the males of the party, the amateurs of beauty, declared the animated countenance, and lustrous eyes of the native belle, divested criticism of its power; and Sir Edward Horton avowed, that in the presence of the Loves, even the absence of the Graces was unremarked.

Zitella had offered her apologies to Lord Arthur Craven, for not dancing in the earlier part of the evening, as he had solicited, for she was conscious her own active exertions were necessary to compensate for the failure of those of Mrs. Nugent, who, wholly occupied with the thoughts of farmer Dobbins, and yet, delighted with the amusement of dancing, between the

two

two subjects of interest, was so entirely lost to other matter, that she had forgotten even those directions she had received from our heroine, in regard to the treatment of her guests.

Craven having accepted the apology, professed his own intention of being merely a spectator, until she should incline to honour him with her hand, and continued at her side with almost ceaseless devotion.

"Do you not incline to dance, my dear Madam?" said Zitella, addressing a young and very lovely female, who had, within the last three months, embraced a matronly appellation.

"Dance! no, I feel no inspiration for that exertion, save it was stimulated by a divinity."

"A divinity!" re-echoed Zitella.

"Yes, nothing less;" and she fixed her eyes on Craven, with unblushing earnestness.

"Do not be so incorrigibly dull, child,"

said Lady Darnford, with her usual bluntness; "ask Lord Arthur Craven to make his bow—that is what Mrs. Fitzroy would insinuate."

"Insinuate!" repeated the fair Amelia, "I would proclaim it, and glory in the distinction and declaration—who would feel shame in adoring the enchanting Craven?"

"Cruel, insensate Arthur!" exclaimed the Dowager, in a theatric tone, "burst the fetters of thine indolence, and speed ye to the love-lorn fair," and she touched his arm with her fan, to arouse his attention.

The enchanting hero of adoration affected to rouse from sleep, and, opening his eyes, with listless voice, repeated—"Nay, your Ladyship has an undivided claim to the accusation of cruelty, for, verily, I have been in happy converse with Queen Mab, and your magic wand has distanced the sovereign of frolic fancy."

"The dreamer awake, Mrs. Fitzroy," said

said Lady Darnford, sarcastically, "may now, perhaps, pay some attention to your expressive approbation."

"Attention! now you know, my Lady, I never had that to bestow on any object of pursuit in my life; I never could command it beyond the moment, and your cruelty would expose my failure in this mental attribute."

"I was only desirous of calling upon the exercise of your feet, and not your head—I was, therefore, more confident of success from the ability of one than the other."

"Pray, my Lady, do you consider my mind as a polypus, whose nature receives a multiplication of its powers by *cutting*, that you apply the sharp weapon of irony with such deep indenture?"

"No, my Lord, I viewed you simply as a poor worm, feeding on the diseased senseless state of humankind!"

"Then my nature would still approximate with the qualities of the polypus, and

its increase be derived from the same source; therefore I ought to consider myself flattered by the endeavour of Lady Darnford to encourage my species."

"Pray, my Lord, did you ever yet conceive yourself flattered? for I actually doubt whether any compliment, however lavish, would by yourself be estimated as more than deserved."

"Yes, in sober earnest, I have; for instance, when your Ladyship complimented my feet as superior to my head, I really thought you flattered them too highly for my credence; now, had you extolled my four-in-hand expedition, I might have been more accessible."

"Oh, my Lord, there I thought your claim to first-rate distinction could not be complimented; for every one must allow, that in an expedition of folly, Lord Arthur Craven must of course outstrip every competitor. But I am anxious for celebrity also; and as females are not admitted into this august club, pray allow me the consola-

tion

tion of having the honour of naming your steeds, who grace this chivalric exploit. I have a passion for appropriate appellations, therefore behold them thus classed —Vanity, Puerility, Absurdity, and Frivolity; and having thus nominated the well-pampered quartetto, I deem your Lordship most eligible for the office of their charioteer, and would be first to wager on your precedence, on this newly-raised turf of fashion."

"A high eulogium, indeed, my Lady, when you conceive me adequate to hold the reins of such unmanageable monsters! for as to the whip, your Ladyship has monopolized it, and used it in truth with a heavy lash."

"It seems to have a scorpion tongue," said the ever ill-bred Arabella Harley, with pert sufficiency.

"Then, young lady," retorted the Dowager, "I would advise you not to play with the perilous scourge, lest you receive a sting beyond your ability to

cure," and she moved on, with demure stately step, to address another acquaintance.

In the interim, Zitella, wearied with those attentions she had been compelled to pay her uncle's numerous guests, and oppressed by the heat of the crowded atmosphere, had taken a solitary vacated seat, near an open window, momentarily to recruit her exhausted strength and spirits, when Colonel Bertie advanced, and, extending his hand with a smile, which conveyed a perfect opinion of its being accepted, said—"Shall I have the honour of leading your Ladyship into the ball-room?"

"I thank you," replied the former, "but I have already declined joining the dancing party."

"*I* purposed having the gratification of becoming your Ladyship's partner," returned Bertie, in a tone that evinced he considered his proposal as misunderstood, or it must have obtained a very different reply.

"Then

"Then permit me to render the purpose transferrable," rejoined Zitella; "and allow me to present you to Miss Harley, who is disengaged, and will prove more accommodating than myself."

"Accommodating!" re-echoed the self-sufficient coxcomb; "pardon me, the gentlemen now accommodate the ladies—they are all merciful angels, who shield mankind from Disappointment, and its thousand attendant ills."

"The gorgon Disappointment, and her little attendant train, whose threatened appearance seem to have alarmed you, gains no admission here to-night; and, presuming upon this, I must again resume my query, whether I have your permission to inform Miss Harley you wait her acquiescence? and the exchange from a listless partner, such as myself, for so gay and cheerful a substitute, will leave you only self congratulation at your own good fortune."

"Your Ladyship has afforded me latitude

tude for so high a compliment, that I can only regret my inability to tender one equivalent to the subject."

"The latitude, Colonel, was of your own creation, therefore the extent must have been consequently measured by your own command."

"Then it would be boundless," said the young guardsman, affectedly. "Oh, fair idol of my hopes," he added, in a lowered voice, "it is not the partner of an hour that I would gain—I would seek your hand as a *life-gift*, and not a mere Thalian loan!"

"In the latitude you claimed, Colonel," she laughingly replied, "you should have announced the admission of *badinage*, though we must own it a correspondent accompaniment."

"Ah, no! harmonious hope is the only accompaniment I wish to the voice of love!"

"Silence then the delusive flatterer, for she too often seduces to betray. Behold that group; the Graces court your attention;

attention; pay your willing homage there; elect one of the party, and banish the Loves, who are at best but mischievous little elves."

"The Graces would not gain by that resolve," returned Bertie; "for it is to the existence of love they owe their multiplication, if not their actual existence; therefore, if I tarry by the divinity of Beauty, I secure both, for they are her never-failing attendants, and this host of attractions must decide my station; consequently at her throne I bend a suppliant, at once for *grace and love!*"

"Having created an imaginary divinity," she laughingly exclaimed, "why not emulate the temerity of Prometheus, and, stealing fire from Heaven, animate it? for nothing yet in mortal form, surely, realized this picture of your brain."

"It reflects reality in the mirror of Lady Zitella Herbert," said Bertie, "whose hand and heart are at this moment the solicited boon

boon of a lover's hopes! smile, then, thou oracle of fate, on my ardent *invocation!*"

"*Seriously*, then, Colonel, for continued *badinage*, upon such a subject, would neither accord with my principles or practice, I can *only* thank you for the honour you have done me; but as I can scarcely conceive a greater contrast in nature than we form, I am satisfied neither our opinions, pursuits, habits of life, or future hopes, can blend; and, having been thus explicit, I can only again assure you of the sense I feel of your unmerited preference, and trust that the subject of the present conversation may be effaced from the memory of both."

"Diffidence is the characteristic of true merit," said the Colonel; "but, indeed, your Ladyship would soon acquire all that would coalesce with my inclinations; and where beauty so superlative would charm, any dereliction from the course of that nonpariel, a *bachelor's wife*, would meet with

with every indulgence; and where so brilliant an understanding is also united, affection, time, and observation, would, doubtless, produce those '*pursuits, habits of life, and future hopes,*' your fears point at."

Zitella, we apprehend, almost forgot propriety, and laughed—"But my fears, dear Colonel, still preponderate; I feel it so wholly impossible to reach the goal of your expectations, that despair arrests my course; be assured, I possess none of the essentials necessary to form the *nonpareil* of your future claims, and again I recommend you to substitute Miss Harley; be as candid with her as you have been with me, and I am greatly mistaken, if you will not find a greater correspondence of sentiments and opinions, than with the honoured object of your present election."

"You certainly are a most extraordinary woman, my Lady—most extraordinary,"

nary," said Bertie; "upon my soul, I do not comprehend you."

"I must indeed be a most *extraordinary* woman," returned Zitella, "according to your own descriptive attributes, and ought to be endowed with the gifts of Pandora; for, you know, we are informed, that Pallas gave her wisdom, Apollo music, Mercury the art of eloquence—a dangerous donation for a wife, by the bye, Colonel; Venus was more considerate, and gave her beauty; while the other gods, still more bountiful, bestowed all other accomplishments. Now, unless I could be made sensible that I had monopolized perfection, and was a second Pandora, even possessed of the last most precious gift of *hope*, how could I presume to raise my eyes to the dizzy eminence from whence the sceptre is extended?"

Bertie, who possessed just sufficient sense to discover, that irony was undoubtedly couched beneath the play of words, enforced

forced by arch, yet impressive manner, did not relish the retort; and satisfied, by the ease and unembarrassed manner with which the subject had been treated, that he had certainly flattered himself, when he admitted expectation of making the heiress his own, in a sullen tone replied—"Your Ladyship's mirth appears rather ill-timed, and the subject equally unfortunate; one hint, however, that you have condescended to throw out, I shall certainly attend to, and that is, to efface the whole from my remembrance; and I trust you will find the course so correct, that even your Ladyship will be prompt for once to follow my example," and, so saying, with a profound, though mortified bow, he quitted her side.

But our heroine was not left to reflection on the matrimonial offer of the ridiculous and ever coxcomical guardsman, for at this moment Miss Clairmond approached.

"I have been just gaining from Sir Horace

Horace Lister, more particular information concerning his romantic adventure on Salisbury Plain."

"To what adventure do you allude?" returned Zitella; "I have heard of none in which Sir Horace was recently concerned."

"Heavens!" exclaimed Euphemia; "why, how extraordinary! how miraculous! when it has been the topic of conversation for the last three days, since the return of this dear enthusiast to town; but hither he advances himself, and you shall have the tale from his own lips.—Do, Sir Horace," she subjoined, as he gained the spot where they were stationary, "do let us have the incident of Stonehenge once more; for Lady Zitella is all anxiety to be made acquainted with the particulars."

The Baronet bowed, and, after an appropriate reply, continued—"Passionately fond of antiquities, under every form, I set out a few days since to visit those much celebrated

celebrated and druidical remains on Salisbury Plain; I stopped at a little village about a mile from the spot, and having discharged my hired chaise, determined upon rusticating there for two days, and afford a pedestrian close to my tour of Wiltshire. I took up my abode at the house of entertainment, which they dignified by the name of the White Hart Inn; it promised but miserable accommodation; yet as I had set off with the expectation of ruralizing, it was immaterial; and having taken an early dinner, I proceeded to Stonehenge; but here I was soon lost in admiration of those wonderful relics of Roman, Saxon, and Danish monuments! I gave free scope to the indulgence of imagination; and once more I saw in resurrection, those mighty dead appear, who had once bowed to these dilapidated vestiges with superstitious reverence. My mind was inclined for meditation, and I indulged it almost to madness, so much had the enthusiasm of my nature gained fuel

fuel from contemplation of this once consecrated spot! I gazed on the spacious wilds, spreading beyond the reach of sight; I listened with mute attention to catch the low tinkling of the sheep-bell; I contrasted it with that of the postman's sonorous jingle, through the noisy sphere of our boasted metropolis of gaiety and splendour; my heart acknowledged association with the rustic summons of the timid flock, and recoiled from the discordant din of London's mighty men of news; I envied the happy shepherd boy, who

"Whistl'd as he went, for want of thought,"

in all the bliss of contented ignorance; I envied the felicity of this race, the embrace of their rustic love-sick Sylvias; and I hailed the faithful watch-dogs, the dumb companions of their toil, as friends in sincerity unequalled. This Arcadian scenery gradually wrought up my mind to a degree of enthusiasm, where, as Dyer expresses,

"——Such

"————————Such the spacious plain
Of Saruna, spread like Ocean's boundless round,
Where solitary Stonehenge, grey with moss,
Ruin of ages, nods!"

Still I wandered, in heavenly rumination lost, until my attention was arrested by a boy, seated upon a fragment of rock, whose appearance interested me. I approached and addressed him; he started up, as if in terror, and wildly gazing around; I felt assured of the cause of his alarm, for his dress announced him attached to the band of a regiment, and over his shoulder hung a small drum. 'Banish your fears, my little fellow,' I exclaimed, smiling, 'I will not betray you. 'Betray me!' he re-echoed; 'gracious God! how did you know the circumstance? I thought myself secure from detection.' 'And so you are,' I returned, 'from me; but my poor fragile son of Mars, those delicate limbs appear very little able to cope with war, when her denouncing thunders roll, or the fatigues and dangers of

of your profession; your eye-sight, too, appears affected; is it the result of a trip to Rosetta?' He drew the shade which protected the precious orbs of sight still more closely over them, as he replied—'I am, Sir, altogether unfit for the profession of arms, and therefore do not wish to pursue it.' 'Your history is soon unfolded, young soldier; I see you are a deserter; but this spot is a dangerous one; this trifle will enable you to change your habiliments, for they are too conspicuous to pass unnoticed, and will therefore doubtless lead into danger; some favourite village maid has probably seduced you from your duty; but you are too young yet to encounter the weight of the marriage yoke.' The boy burst into tears, and so irrepressible were his sobs, that I felt still more attracted by his sensibility, and, seating myself beside him, soothed his grief, and pointed out the road I conceived would be most conducive to his comfort and advantage.

"In the course of my observations, some-

something of the ridiculous occurred, and a smile played over the features of the drummer, which exhibited not only the most perfectly beautiful mouth and teeth, but correspondent dimples, that led me for a moment to doubt his sex; but I hinted not the observation.

"He had previously announced his intention of remaining at the White Hart Inn for the night, and, rising from his seat, pursued his course. I suffered him to depart, and in two hours after followed myself; but the little *ignis fatuus* had misled me—he did not return. Night came, expectation exhausted itself; though curiosity was on the alert, I however retired to bed, and the next morning intended bidding adieu to Wiltshire, to pursue my way to Clifton, and its picturesque vicinity; but, fatigued with my rambles of the preceding evening, I had but just risen at the hour of ten, when an unusual noise drew my attention to the window, where I beheld a chaise and four

just driving from the door; my lungs supplied the lack of bell, for I really thought I had glimpsed my little soldier metamorphosed into the elegant inhabitant of the chaise; my call was obeyed by every inhabitant of the family, and my conjecture proved right—the account of the landlady was as follows:

"That, the day before, our little masquerader had arrived on foot, and, asking for a chamber, ordered dinner, which happened to be of such fare, as they doubted the ability of their new guest to discharge; this was hinted to him without much ceremony, when, to their infinite surprise, he drew forth an apparently well-stocked purse, and throwing two guineas on the table, imperiously demanded if that would reimburse them? The now civil landlady curtsied her acquiescence, and the boy was suffered to eat his dinner in peace, and certainly in plenty; soon after which he walked out, and did not again appear until a very early hour the following morning,

morning, when he seemed overwhelmed in grief; the shade was removed from his face, and exhibited the perfect beauty of his features; he refused all sustenance, and having ordered a post-chaise and four, the only horses the house afforded, paid the money previous to his entering the carriage, and had driven from the door, as I had just witnessed. My curiosity, or rather interest, was highly excited, perhaps absurdly so; but the romance of my nature, once aroused, was not to be allayed; and with indefatigable perseverance, I sought a developement of a disguise, which, it was now evident, existed in the habit of the mendicant drummer, for such he had appeared; my endeavours have in some measure been crowned with success, and I am almost convinced of having discovered his present place of concealment."

"Where? oh, where?" exclaimed Zitella, with an emphatic earnestness, that heightened the astonishment of the little group collected around to hear the ad

venture of the fashionable tourist, still more than the degree of attentive interest which her countenance had manifested during the recital.

A smile of meaning hung on the lips of Lady Darnford, and the intelligent eyes of Molesworth were fixed so steadfastly on the features of the orphan, that the embarrassment visibly encreased, which was not lessened by the Countess rejoining—"Is this very handsome, very mysterious youth, then, another of your Ladyship's pensioners, that renders him an object of such singular interest?"

"If he be an individual of the smallest interest, I much regret," replied Sir Horace, "that I cannot reply to your Ladyship's query, with perfect satisfaction either to you or myself; for, having promised not to betray the elegant fugitive, I conceive my lips in honour sealed, as to the discovery of his present place of residence."

"Dear me!" said Miss Harley, whose prompt

prompt volubility interrupted the reply of our heroine, "I do not doubt the picturesque drummer is no other than that very Mr. Milford, to whom your Ladyship was so kind, so *particularly* bounteous; for the date of the peregrination of Sir Horace Lister corresponds with the time you were a visitant of Salisbury Plain, and no doubt he was seeking his charitable friend—was it not so, Lady Zitella? oh, do inform us if it was, for I delight in a tale of wonder!"

Zitella attempted to reply, but as she commenced, she once more met the view of Molesworth, pregnant with a doubtful apprehension, that recalled painfully to her memory those insinuations in regard to George Milford, with which she had been made acquainted by the Dowager; and now convinced that they were not unknown to him whose good opinion she most valued, she acutely felt her own situation, on being withheld from explaining the rise of that interest she felt in the

route of the hero of Sir Horace's narrative, more especially as Miss Harley had metamorphosed the mysterious soldier into that very George Milford; the fact almost involuntarily escaped her lips; but the consideration of having pledged herself to Lady Edgeworth, to maintain profound secrecy concerning the ill-judged visit, the recollection, that accident alone had placed her in possession of the circumstance, and that it would indeed be a treacherous return for hospitality and kindness, to betray the domestic events which had passed beneath the roof of her guardian's mansion, checked the spontaneous answer, and her hesitating voice, and highly-coloured cheeks, but rivetted greater attention upon herself, as Miss Clairmond now exclaimed, in what she conceived a pathetic tone—"Indeed, my dear Lady Zitella, I would not have called upon Sir Horace for the repetition of his singular anecdote, if I had conceived it would have affected you so severely; what

exquisite

exquisite sensibility you possess! you know not how highly I prize this proof of tender feeling."

Doubtful whether irony might not be concealed under this speech of the romantic Euphemia, and still further distressed by the sarcasm which she beheld hovering on the lip of the cruel Countess, the spirits of Zitella yielded; and, conscious of being unable longer to support even the raillery of those around, in regard to the interest she manifested for the young fugitive, the unfortunate heiress complained of being overcome by the excessive heat of the room, and without hesitation accepted the proffered arm of the attentive Craven, to lead her towards one less crowded, anxious only to remove from the observation of him she really loved, and the unfeeling satire of Lady Darnford. A few minutes, however, restored her self-composure, and, provoked at her own weakness, she determined to make an effort for its subjugation; and

therefore acquiesced in now joining the dancers with his Lordship, and for that purpose proceeded to the ball-room, where her exertions received a further stimulus, although her composure was somewhat lessened, by perceiving Clarence Molesworth the partner of the envied Marian.

The remainder of the evening passed heavily to the admired heiress, and most joyfully did she greet the receding wheels of the last vehicle which departed from the sumptuous entertainment of the nabob's wife.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

I know I love in vain, strive against hope;
Yet in the captious and intenible sieve,
I still pour in the waters of my love,
And lack not to love still!

SHAKESPEARE.

The Curate's Daughter.

FARMER Dobbins had returned the former evening to the Nagg's Head, as he had intimated his intention to the party assembled in Park-lane; and we must confess, the very cold manner of Nugent, in greeting this early friend of his wife, had contributed to confirm his resolution; nor could the expostulations of Fanny alter the arrangement. He, however, called

the next morning, and, with difficulty, was permitted admission into the mansion of the nabob; nor would this have been effected, but for the interference of Zitella, who undertook to gain her uncle's consent, that he should be invited to dine with the family party that day; this was with some difficulty obtained, although no entreaties could induce Nugent to be present at the table; and having professed an engagement abroad, he suffered Fanny to enjoy the society congenial to her taste and early affections.

The good farmer had merely taken London in his way to Bristol, where he had business, as much from the wish to see "*his dear little Fanny Martin*," as to behold the marvellous city, of which report had told such wondrous tales; he was, therefore, fortunately for the feelings of Mr. Nugent, compelled to make a short stay in town, but promised to see her again before he returned into Yorkshire, which would not be, most probably, for many

many weeks, as he had a law matter to arrange, of some consequence to his own interest.

Two mornings after, passing down Bond-street, in an elegant landaulet, stationary at the door of a perfumer's, sat a very fashionable-looking female, whose features appeared familiar to the memory of our heroine, but not immediately recollecting where she had formed the acquaintance, she passed without recognition; when the carriage, however, turned a second time, she was satisfied that the lady by whom she had been attracted was Miss Gifford, daughter of the curate of Oakhampton, one of her juvenile intimates, and whom she had last seen immediately on her return from a Bath expedition, in search of a matrimonial establishment in that land of promise, and, from present appearance, concluded her old acquaintance had been a successful adventurer in the Hymenean lottery.

Anxious to make enquiry after her re-

spected friend Mrs. Mulgrave, rather, we must acknowledge, than from any particular interest in the fair Gifford, Lady Zitella resolved upon speaking to her; and Mrs. Nugent at this moment alighting from her carriage to make some purchase at a shop, her Ladyship ordered the coachman to draw up by the side of the landaulet.

Mutual civilities having passed between the ladies, our orphan tendered enquiries after their esteemed friend, the good widow.

"Poor old soul," returned the former, "she is quite as worthy as ever, and busily employed at this moment consoling my father and mother for my loss; and a very serious one it is at the parsonage, I assure you; but to vegetate there, as immoveable as the fruit-trees in their well-stocked garden, to take root and be nailed for ever to the spot where they were first cultured, met not my ideas of happiness; I chose to be transplanted into a different

different soil; nor," added she, with theatric tone, "'longer to bloom unseen,' especially when the temptation offered itself under so fascinating a form as Major Stanley; so I left the old rookery, and the name of Gifford, and am now an inhabitant of Upper Brook-street, Grosvenor-square, where I shall be most happy to renew the intimacy of former days."

Our heroine gazed at the metamorphosed village nymph with astonishment, but certainly not arising from the cause which the vanity and folly of the object had led her to conclude; for, enchanted at her own elevation, it had never entered into her imagination but that she had become a personage of such consequence, as to create not only the surprise of all her early acquaintance, but also of their envy.

"I shall certainly," answered our orphan, "avail myself of the incident of this morning, to make my early enquiries in

in Brook-street, after the daughter of my esteemed friend, and shall be happy to be personally made known to Major Stanley."

"The opportunity offers at this moment —for behold him here," returned the former, as two very elegant young men approached the carriage.

"This lady, my dear Stanley, is one of my oldest friends—her beauty alone would be a sufficient passport to your favour; but she not only possesses that, but every other distinction that bounteous fortune can bestow; and now, having made your advance to further acquaintance easy, I leave you to present your companion."

The Major bowed, as he named "Colonel Mason."

Zitella felt both surprised and mortified at the improper manner of her introduction; a smile, which sat upon the face of either, was to her incomprehensible; but her attention was soon arrested by the latter, who entered into a very spirited conversation,

conversation, in which all her powers were called forth, from the unexpected flow of voluble vivacity in her new associate.

A party for the opera was now proposed for the evening; but our orphan shrunk from the necessity of adding Mrs. Nugent to the group, and therefore declined the invitation, at the moment that lady, having made her purchases, issued from the shop to ascend the carriage.

Zitella abruptly concluded the conversation, and in a few minutes they were on their way home.

"Who were all those smart folks?" exclaimed her companion; "the beauty of the lady was not all her own, for she was terribly painted; but the gentlemen, to my thinking, were both very handsome."

"Neither of *them* were known to me before this morning," said Zitella; "but the lady is an old acquaintance, under a new name; she is the daughter of a most worthy pair; the mother, renowned for deeds of charity and benevolence, is the

Lady

Lady Bountiful of the village of which her excellent husband is curate, and to whom most truly may be applied these two lines, as perfectly descriptive of this good man in his professional situation—

> "Truth from his lips prevail'd with double sway,
> And fools who came to scoff remain'd to pray!"

Mrs. Stanley is their only child; but, insensible of her faults, and but too much alive to every recommendation with which nature, or their extravagant affection, had decked her, she became vain and presuming, while these traits of character, I fear, have been brought to maturity by her change of situation; at no period did she ever rank high in my estimation, nor should I have been ambitious of cultivating a renewal of acquaintance, but from respect to her parents, and more particularly the good curate, whose unremitting attentions to my dear mother, in the last stage of her life, will not easily be erased from my remembrance."

"Well,

"Well, now, that is really very good of you, niece, to recollect what is gone by so long ago; it is just like me, for I can't, for my life, help loving all farmer Dobbins's family; and nothing makes me so cross, as when Hubby scoffs at them; and when he wished the devil had them, it gave me such a turn, I did not recover it for the day; and I can't see why he could have been so bitter against them, only I know he might be a little jealous or so of Giles, dear good soul, who was always doing kind things to help me when I was a poor child, and had not another friend in the world but them; for Mrs. Vincent, who had then only seen me in dirt and tears, thought me a fright, and said she could not have so ugly a creature near her; for, you know, she sent me off in a jiffy to the farm-house, and kept me there, and paid for me; but dear farmer Dobbins, and his wife, and Giles, did not care whether I was ugly or not; they always told me to remember, '*handsome is as handsome does*;'

does;' and their charity was never bestowed upon people only because they were beauties; and as to Giles Dobbins, once when I was ill with a fever, and lay upon a straw mattrass in the garret, he gave up to me his nice little room and his flock bed, and said I should sleep there; and he went up into the loft himself, and never would let me go there again; and I am sure I should be worse than a negro, if I was to forget it. Mrs. Vincent was very kind to me afterwards, I must say; but I never was so happy with her, for when I spoke of the Dobbinses, she always snubbed me, and called me a simpleton; and once, when I was telling the captain of the India ship, on our voyage, about the cruelty of my mother, when she almost killed me for letting farmer Dobbins's cart go over the pig, I really thought Mrs. Vincent would have beat me; and after that she never would let me speak, though, I am sure, I never said any harm, nor never told untruths; but she said, as long

as

as I held my tongue, I should do wonders; and she only wished she could put a padlock on my mouth; now, to my thinking, that was as barbarous an act as ever that evil-minded woman, Lady Darnford, could have uttered; for that was as bad as the ferrets are served when they are sent to hunt rabbits; for, you know, the folks in the country always sew up their mouths; and I ever after always thought of her wicked desire, whenever I was going to talk before her; and so she had no occasion for her padlock at last, for I was almost as dumb as if she had really put it on; and one day, soon after we arrived, she ordered me to dress myself in some of my best clothes, for she was going to have company at dinner; but when I was going to put on my gown, it had so many fine fal-lals, that it seemed to me neither to have a beginning nor an end, and I could not tell how to get into it, and so I caught it up in my hand, and ran to ask her how it was to be done; but she sent me off faster

faster than I went, and called me a little savage! but still, notwithstanding all her vagaries, and her tanterums, and her frumpishness, she was very good to me, and I shall always thank her to my dying hour."

"A grateful heart," replied Zitella, "is surely one of the most precious gifts of Heaven; I have seldom known a bad person possess it; and it is, in my opinion, a virtue that is never solo; but I fear we have been detained rather later than we ought, and shall scarcely have time to change our dress for dinner—are we to be alone?"

"Entirely," replied the former; "but I had almost forgotten that Hubby promised we should go to the play this evening."

"It had wholly escaped my memory also," returned Zitella.

At this moment the carriage stopt at Park-lane; on the steps descending from the house, appeared Nugent, dressed as if going

going to a dinner-party—"You are rather late from your morning tour, ladies," he exclaimed; "but you will not, I trust, forget your engagement with Lady Dorville, whose attention has secured you seats for the theatre."

"Does her Ladyship expect a large party in her box this evening?" asked Zitella.

"Lady Dorville has become so wedded to Bath," he replied, "that her stay here being only for a few weeks, she has no box this season; but I doubt not you will be comfortably situated under her auspices," and, stepping into the carriage, was soon out of sight.

Our orphan felt little pleasurable sensation from the promised amusement, although the whole comic power of Drury-lane was directed to their entertainment, as poor Mrs. Nugent's early habits were so constantly on the alert, that all her efforts could not keep them within due bounds.

The

The duties of the table were soon dismissed, for the *tête-à-tête* was not sufficiently congenial to run any risk of being prolonged by conversation, since, although the simple virtues of the rustic Fanny interested her regard, they were so completely counterbalanced by the errors of the head, and continued solecisms, from ignorance of the most common forms of society, that our orphan always sustained considerable anxiety, when placed at her elbow, in that sphere in which local circumstances had fixed her.

At the appointed hour they repaired to the house of Lady Dorville, who professed herself extremely disappointed in the non-attendance of Mr. Nugent, on whom she had depended for an escort; but as no alternative offered itself, and the hint from Zitella, of a postponement of their theatrical visit, was received by Mrs. Nugent almost with tears, the subject was not pursued, and they reached the destined spot at rather an early hour.

Having

Having taken their seats, the curtain drew up, and the mimic scene soon so wholly engrossed our heroine, that every aukward preceding event was lost in delight of the present, when she was forcibly attracted by the opening of the box door, to give entrance to the two military beaux of the morning. A recognition was unavoidable; but much annoyed and disconcerted by the rencontre, she sat almost silent by the side of the automaton Lady Dorville, until Colonel Mason, in an audible voice, exclaimed—"Do me the favour of presenting me to that beautiful sister of your's in the corner."

The address was rather more familiar and unceremonious than Zitella approved, coupled with a freedom of manner, and unlicensed gaze, at which her delicacy revolted; she therefore coldly replied—"I have not the honour of so near a connexion with Mrs. Nugent."

"No, she is only my niece," cried the latter, "and not a bit of a relation to me; though

though she is worthy of being kin to Queen Charlotte herself, for she is as good a girl as ever drew breath, or broke bread; but she is only the child of my Hubby's sister, and is come to London to see the world."

"A spacious field for an optical exhibition," said Stanley, "while your fair relative may herself become the luminary to throw light on the land of discovery."

"I am sure she need not fear any discovery," replied the literal Fanny, who, not very clear in the conception of his meaning, only concluded he intended some indirect arrow at our heroine, "for the more you see of her, the more you will like her; and if I was a man, I would rather have her without a gown to her back, than any of the fly-flipets I have seen since I have been here."

"A daughter of Paradise, indeed!" said Major Stanley, "by Nature's handmaid dressed, in beauty all her own!"

Trembling, with a mixture of shame for her

her companion, indignation at the impertinent freedom of the new-made husband, and at her own unprotected situation, our orphan sat speechless, until the idea, that the intruders were most probably under the influence of intoxication, crossed her imagination, when, with haughtiness, resulting from circumstance, she replied—"The forms of society, she believed, did not perfectly authorize an addition to their party, so made, and she therefore hoped Major Stanley and his friend would postpone, to some future opportunity, that introduction to the rest of the party they had at the present moment waved."

"The force of beauty, my dear Madam," returned the Colonel, "like the trite aphorism of hunger, bursts all barriers; and when perfection is placed before our eyes, how can you expect that mere forms and ceremonies should be permitted successfully to intervene between us and happiness? The religion of Mahomet teaches them only to look to a *future*

Paradise for Houri; but when these divinities condescend to visit earth, if we become a little inebriated by such unexpected felicity, the cause should sufficiently plead an apology for the effect," and with offensive freedom he offered to take her hand.

" No apology, Sir, can successfully plead when politeness is outraged," replied the indignant Zitella; but with the severity of this speech all her forced spirits evaporated, as the door again opened, and, to her inexpressible relief, Mr. Molesworth appeared.

An exclamation of genuine delight hailed his approach, as the listless Lady Dorville, who had been so completely engrossed in recognition of her different acquaintance near her, with the aid of her opera-glass, recovered from her fit of abstraction, and whispered—" Who are those two gentlemen speaking to Mr. Molesworth?"

While Mrs. Nugent was giving as concise

cise an account as her retentive powers admitted, our heroine overheard Colonel Mason repeat—" Lady Zitella Herbert! impossible, my dear fellow; why, I this morning was presented to her, in company with the *nominal* Mrs. Stanley, when in Bond-street; we interrupted a very familiar *tête-à-tête.*"

" Be assured," replied Molesworth, " some mistake exists beyond my ability to solve; these ladies are of the greatest respectability, and of my particular acquaintance."

" Then," returned the Colonel, " the sooner we make our exit, the better; for conceiving, from the circumstance mentioned, that they were of that description who required no particular respect, I fear we have both failed too much on that ground, to hope for pardon; but try, my good friend, what you can do for us with that sweet angel, who has treated me so mercilessly, and if the case admit of forgiveness, endeavour to secure it for me;

I have sinned from ignorance, so gain me absolution, dear Molesworth, and save me from despair."

"I trust," replied the former, "your offence has not been of magnitude; but I cannot boast of my interest there; I am myself more indebted to the kind report of a friend for my passport, than to any length of acquaintance; but I must rest my interference upon the report the lady makes of you."

"I commit my cause into your hands," he returned; "but the gravity of that beauteous brow portends no favourable report."

With a profound and respectful bow, he now took the arm of Major Stanley, and they quitted the box together. Clarence Molesworth instantly took the seat vacated; but an aukward and embarrassed silence for some minutes succeeded; for Zitella, being now in possession of the clue to the freedom of her late companion, transferred a considerable part of her displeasure

pleasure from them to herself, from her unguarded recognition of Miss Gifford; though not having the most remote idea that such effrontery existed in the female character, she was perfectly unprepared for the deception practised on her, but which had recently taken place; yet it was impossible that she could make the avowal, and therefore waited in painful anxiety for the subject being broached.

At length Molesworth broke silence—"Colonel Mason is much distressed, Lady Zitella, at the aukward circumstance which has occurred, and I am requested to apologize on his behalf to the party, but more especially to your Ladyship, for the error into which he has been led by circumstance I am wholly at a loss how to explain, and yet it is absolutely necessary. May I take the liberty of enquiring, whether you have ever met with, or heard of a young woman, who calls herself Mrs. Stanley?"

"Too surely I have; but this question

sets the whole matter before me: that lady is the daugher of a village curate, whom I had not seen for a length of time until this morning, when in Bond-street a rencontre took place; she proclaimed her change of name and residence; presented one of the gentlemen who have just left the box, I conceived as her husband; the other was at the moment his companion; we shortly after separated, without any mention of the intention of either to visit the theatre this evening, and I was of course surprised when they made their *entré*."

Molesworth now explained, in as delicate terms as possible, the dereliction of Miss Gifford from the paths of honour, and the total ignorance of either gentleman of the individuals they had presumed to join, until he had himself informed them.

The occurrence of the present evening, as well as every other preceding one, only convinced our heroine more forcibly of the

the improper situation which the folly of her uncle had placed her, subjected to the thousand inconveniences which were constantly resulting, either from the vulgarity, or that want of knowledge of the world, which marked the wife of Nugent, and rendered her so wholly unfit either for a companion, or *chaperone,* for our heroine, whose spirits, at the moment, had received a check she endeavoured to conquer; and although such a stimulant as the conversation of Molesworth aided her efforts, she certainly did not appear to usual advantage.

At the conclusion of the first act of the entertainment, Lord Arthur Craven and Mr. Nugent made their appearance, and almost immediately after, Clarence tendered his parting bow.

The very pointed attentions of the heir of Somerton now began to distance, in a great measure, other pretenders to the favour of the heiress; but as she was in the constant habit of meeting Molesworth

at dinner and evening parties, each, without appearing to notice the other, had opportunities of further acquaintance, that only encreased the exalted opinion our orphan entertained of the still interesting individual to whom her heart had yielded; while in her presence that individual, often again roused to enthusiastic admiration, owned the peccant spots he still believed existed, buried in the radiance of her manifold perfections.

The timid Marian did not follow the dissipated routine of her mother with undeviating steps, for she seldom appeared in the crowded parties of our metropolis; but when she did, her cherub form seemed to cling to the protection of Molesworth, as if he were the only individual who could impart confidence to her trembling heart.

Often would Clarence resolve to banish himself from the too attractive *heiress;* often would he hesitate on the half determined mental vow, to fly the dangerous

presence

presence of her, who, independant of the warning counsels of fastidious reason, was separated from him by impenetrable barriers. His fortune was small, with no one relative or connexion in existence to whom he could look for assistance or advice—"*This unfortunate young man,*" as the Dean of L—— had painfully styled him, would remain for hours brooding over events strange and inexplicable; and often the Charles Moreton of Marian's fond remembrance, lived in mental review; his health, which the happy climate of England had in some measure renovated on his first arrival, now once more yielded to the melancholy depression of his spirits; he resigned himself to the impression of an early grave, and under this gloomy anticipation, he conceived that he might yet indulge the only gratification his heart could now experience, that of seeing, and sometimes conversing with, its secretly-beloved Zitella.

CHAP. XI.

Sweet drop of pure and pearly light,
In thee the rays of virtue shine
More calmly clear, more mildly bright,
Than any gem that gilds the mine.

ROGERS.

Oh serpent heart, hid with a flow'ry face,
Did ever dragon keep so fair a cave?
Beautiful tyrant, fiend angelical!

SHAKESPEARE.

The solitary Guinea.

LADY Zitella Herbert was one morning, some short time after, receiving the visit of Marian Ancaster, who had called to make some arrangements on behalf of her mother, in regard to an excursion to the botanical

botanical garden at Kew, which had been planned some days previous, and of which party her Ladyship and Mrs. Nugent were to have been an addition. As the residence of the Dean of L—— was in one of the streets leading out of Park-lane, a carriage had not been employed for Miss Ancaster's conveyance, as Clarence Molesworth had engaged to be her escort in the short distance, and had with her entered the house of Mr. Nugent.

Marian was seldom voluble in conversation, but this morning she was even more than usually silent; the discourse, therefore, from compulsion, rested almost entirely between Molesworth and Zitella. While they were thus engaged, in no very painful occupation to either, the door was suddenly thrown open, and Mrs. Nugent ran in, exclaiming—"My dear niece, you will do me the greatest kindness in the world, if you will pass yourself off for me—do, there's a dear—will you oblige me?"

"Pass myself off for you! how, my dear Madam? I am at a loss to understand you."

"Oh," she returned, "it shall be no loss at all to you, for I will pay whatever you like to give."

"Explain," cried Zitella laughing; "it is all an enigma, for, in *literal* language, I do not comprehend your meaning."

"Lord love you! I had forgot you didn't know any thing about it. Why, yesterday, you must know, I had a letter from a young man, a sort of a beggar, I believe, to ask me to subscribe to some poetry, and something about a sick somebody belonging to him; and Hubby said the story interested him, and he would see the person himself, and he appointed him to call here at this hour; but he is gone out and forgot it; and as I can't bear unhappy histories, for they always make me cry, and give me head-aches, I shall be very much obliged to you to speak to him for me; and you need not tell the man who you

you are, unless you like it; and, pray, ask him all sorts of questions, or Nugent will be angry;" and off she ran, without waiting for a reply, as Zitella rose to ring for the admission of the petitioner.

"Mr. Morris" was announced, and our orphan immediately recognized the poor invalid she had encountered on the road from Dorsetshire, when she first left home; his person still bore evident symptoms of consumption; his voice, deep and hollow, yet was pleasing, nor could fail to create commiseration; his face, pale and languid; while his figure presented the most interesting outline imagination could form.

The poor sufferer was received with that sympathy by each individual, he appeared so well entitled to arrest; in evident pain and embarrassment, he opened his cause; it was to solicit patronage for a volume of poems by subscription; the first blush of wounded feeling visited his pallid countenance, as he subjoined, that no consideration of self would have induced the appeal;

peal; but the recollection of a mother, ill, and dependent, was sufficient to smother those distressing goads, which the remembrance of other days, and other scenes, would otherwise have presented, to deter him from the dreadful task! He concluded by saying, he was aware he had the honour of addressing Lady Zitella Herbert, as he had learned from the servant, that Mrs. Nugent had given him that reference.

The heart of our heroine overflowed with the best and kindest emotions; she viewed, with the most lively sympathy, the poor invalid; the miseries he had endured appeared rather to have rendered his feelings still more sensitive, than to have blunted their finer powers.

The traits of refinement were legible in every sentence uttered, in every movement of the ill-starred Morris. She sickened at this idea of poverty so forcibly obtruded on her mind; they blended with the delicacy of polished education, and

feelings

feelings apparently nurtured by the habits of the young poet; she deliberated on the means of bestowing a sum that would accord both with her wishes to aid him, and her ability to do so. A bank-note, the value of which would perhaps have astonished the suppliant, was actually taken from her pocket, where it had been committed but a few hours before, for the discharge of a tradesman's bill, when the sarcastic, the ill-natured, indelicate inferences of Lady Darnford, respecting George Milford, obtruded upon her mind; it was true, that the Countess was perhaps the only woman in the whole circle of her acquaintance, who would have had so little decency, as to have offered those insinuations; still was she convinced, that although they may have remained unuttered, they would yet have existed; and she trembled at the idea of again exposing her name to the illiberal censure of a malicious world; she observed, with painful embarrassment, that the

the eyes of Molesworth were fixed, with scrutinizing earnestness, upon her; the thought, that he too had doubtless heard similar observations upon her munificence to the unprincipled Milford, and might draw still more unfavourable conclusions, upon a like liberality to the interesting Morris, terminated the mental debate, as the latter resumed—

"The honour of your Ladyship's name, coupled with that of Mrs. Nugent, will be of considerable advantage to my humble literary attempt, and will ensure it a passport to those circles, in which it is my ambition it should be received"

"If my name, Mr. Morris, can afford you any aid in your attempt, you are at liberty, Sir, to enrol it in your list of subscribers; and I sincerely wish your intended publication may realize your most sanguine expectations."

The subscription was only nine shillings, and Zitella, dreading the effects of one extreme,

extreme, unfortunately fell into another—a solitary guinea was placed in the hand of Morris!

Ashamed of the donation, yet fearful of the construction that might attach to a larger, she reserved to herself the intention of affording more substantial proof of her commiseration for the hapless sufferer, through some indirect channel, which could not be traced to her hand. She raised her eyes to Molesworth, but the expression she met there, of the mixed sensation of astonishment, regret, and displeasure, wounded her feelings, and mortified her pride; she, however, turned to Morris, and simply requested his address, that her uncle might have the opportunity of forwarding his encouragement to the work in agitation.

Morris laid the plan of subscription down upon the table, as he prepared to tender the required direction. Marian advanced, and with the tremulous voice of diffidence, she could never conquer on any

any occasion, where she was forced to the smallest exertion, repeated—" My name is too undistinguished to aid your purpose by its insertion, therefore suffer me, Sir, to contribute my small mite, unnoticed in the great account."

The comparatively slender purse of the innocent girl, afforded a boon extensive as that of "*the heiress!*"

The bow, the respectful bow of the distinguishing Morris, marked unequivocally, though unconsciously, his estimation of either. Marian knew not the sum bestowed by Zitella, for her thoughts and attention had been otherwise directed, or she would have felt the severity of her rebuke too powerfully to have inflicted it.

Morris retired, having presented his address to our heroine, when, as a servant delivered a message, in an under tone, to our heroine, the impetuous Clarence exclaimed, as he turned towards Marian—" Sweet interesting girl! how much more is there in the *manner* than the gift alone! surely

surely compassion is the first auxiliary of female beauty, and the tear of pity the best, sincerest proof of an amiable heart."

"The young man seems a very deserving object," said Miss Ancaster, "while his attention and kindness to his poor sick mother really affects me."

"There certainly is," returned Lady Zitella, "a considerable degree of interest attached to him; or rather," added she, hesitating, and fearing to appear too much awakened to his distresses, "to his history; for genius seems to languish beneath the pressure of untoward circumstance; but semblance and reality bear so near an affinity to the eye of humanity, that, unable to discriminate, the one frequently proves the *ignis fatuus* that detaches us from the other."

"It is a dangerous discovery in early life," gravely rejoined Clarence; "the penalty attached to imposition in these cases, is by me, I confess, considered less injurious,

injurious, than the admission of suspicious distrust in the youthful breast."

The reproof had arisen from that energy of sentiment and feeling, which flowed spontaneous from the lips of Molesworth, who was, however, almost immediately conscious of the impropriety of even this oblique reflection, on the conduct of one to whom he had no right to offer either advice or correction.

Zitella coloured, her eyes sought the carpet, they dared not meet the view of him she loved; a consciousness of the strong interest she really felt for his good opinion, silenced the attempt to regain it, since she feared to betray, by apparent solicitude, the secret of her unsought heart; with assumed coldness, she consequently replied—"Suspicion could never be a voluntary, nor a welcome inmate in any bosom."

Marian now rose to depart, and Clarence, making his *congé* at the same moment,

ment, took the hand of his young charge to lead her down the stairs.

The parting salutation passed, the till then suppressed tears swam in the eyes of the misjudged orphan; and resting her arm on the table, she sat in motionless rumination on the past scene, until aroused by the voice of Clarence, who re-entered the room in search of his gloves, which he had forgotten; his errand was announced; but Lady Zitella, whose tears had streamed unchecked, from the impression that she should not be intruded upon, feared to attempt speaking, and still more to be seen; she therefore stooped down, as if to caress a large Newfoundland dog, the favourite of Mr. Nugent, repeating—"Poor Neptune, poor fellow;" she hoped to convince Molesworth his return had not been observed; but Molesworth, satisfied that the elevation of his voice could no more have been unheard than the opening of the door, felt the painful certainty, that an "*heiress,*" equally unused to the voice

voice of admonition or reproof, was wholly unable to sustain a touch of the discordant string; and hence arose the conviction, that such a being could never encounter, with firmness becoming the frail tenant of mortality, the various casualties, and unavoidable incidents, that attend the happiest career of existence.

As he had pictured the mind of Zitella far superior to the general class of women, he felt in a greater degree the humiliation attached to what he conceived the discovery of her puerility; but ere he again closed the door, he could not resist indulging a momentary gaze on the lovely object of his deep regret and disappointment; an involuntary sigh, from the very centre of his heart, was stifled ere it rose to his lips; reason temporarily palsied the force of love; and he acknowledged that he now ought rather to rejoice, than lament, those barriers of wealth and rank, which distanced from his possession, a female apparently so ill calculated to constitute

stitute the happiness of wedded life; yet even at that moment he was sensible of the weakness which would have yet bowed the homage of his heart, had not inauspicious fortune buried every aspiring hope in the womb of adverse fate.

He descended the stairs with precipitation, as he sought to lose with the sight of the beloved object, the painful remembrance which haunted him; but, alas! he bore with him unusual depression, and had communicated a sufficient quantum, effectually to disturb the repose of the miserable heiress.

The streaming tears again flowed unchecked, as this indulgence gave a temporary relief to her breaking heart. The hapless orphan recollected not the exposure of the room in which she sat to the entrance of morning visitors, for whom she had given no order of denial, until aroused by the servant announcing "Lord Arthur Craven."

He entered with a listless *degagée* air, which

which he assumed, often from the mere whim of the moment, when the appearance of our heroine suddenly arrested every thought; caprice and folly were at once put to flight, and all the soul of genuinely sensitive feelings, was awakened by the sorrow of her who had inspired him with a greater degree of mingled admiration and esteem than he had ever avowed; the manner was impulsive, with which he pressed her hand against his heart, and the tone of voice undisguisedly tender, as he delicately adverted to the pain he suffered, in beholding her the victim of grief, apparently so acute.

A faint smile played over the April countenance of Zitella; she felt ashamed of the awkward situation in which she had been surprised, and, trembling at the fear of discovering its origin, she blushed in giving utterance to a feigned excuse, that a tale of woe in real life had awakened her to painful sympathy; and, hastily drying her tears, she attempted turning the conversation;

versation; but the breast of Craven owned the throb of pity, and she never appeared more interesting to him than at this moment; his eyes were bent on her with softest expression, as he replied—

"It is perhaps a trite observation, but it is one to whose truth I at this moment accord, that beauty never assails the heart with such resistless influence, as when blended with sensibility; why we should blush to acknowledge the supremacy of that heavenly attribute over our mind, or chase away the starting tear of softest pity, I cannot determine, for it is surely the great distinction of our nature over the inferior objects of creation."

The orphan felt ashamed at exacting the unmerited compliment implied, and felt, more particularly at the moment, unworthy of it, as she had not only suffered her tears to flow from self-humiliation, but had submitted to varnish the truth by evasion; in order, therefore, to make some atone-

ment, in a way from which benefit could be derived, she drew the conversation towards the unfortunate author, and after pourtraying the misery of dependence upon a purse-proud and unfeeling relative, concluded by saying—"Poor Morris appears to be heavily weighed down, not only by corporeal malady, but by mental affliction; the exquisite sensibility of genuine merit, therefore, I fear, will be clouded under existing circumstance, which, unless removed, may eventually extinguish the lustre of poetic fire."

"Morris!" ejaculated Craven; "the nephew of Lord Eddermore?"

"The same."

"And appeal for succour to your Ladyship? that does indeed surprise me!"

"And wherefore?" said Zitella, in a tone of the most natural astonishment.

The look of surprise was now reflected on the countenance of Craven; but, as if suddenly recollecting himself, he said, with

with some embarrassment—"I—I was mistaken; that is, I did not know this young man solicited publicly."

Zitella's surprise did not vanish, for there was visible confusion in the reply of his Lordship; and it was evident his first observation had a reason he did not afterwards wish to confess; but conceiving she might distress, by pressing for an explanation of his inadvertent declaration, she continued silent; the lips of Lord Arthur were so likewise, but his eyes spoke a language fraught with the impassioned energy of his nature, which told somewhat of a tale of love.

We have observed, that the attentions of Lord Arthur had for some time previous been marked towards our heroine, so much so, as to leave to the world in general little doubt as to his future wishes; but they had never so forcibly struck the individual most concerned, as during the subsequent conversation which passed this morning, and gave to them a still more

decided tone, while an open declaration appeared to hover on his lips, as he was suddenly interrupted by the entrance of Mrs. Nugent, who, having completed a long consultation with her fancy-dress-maker, now made her appearance, voluble in the repetition of the compliments she had received from the obsequious *Madame*, on her great taste in the selection of ornaments.

Our orphan was not one of those *naïve* females, who never remark the attentions of a lover, nor dream that he is so, until he has actually offered himself as a husband. In fact, Zitella had sufficient knowledge of the forms of society, to be convinced that Lord Arthur would even be convicted in public opinion, as having acted a dishonourable part, did no matrimonial proposal close the assiduous devotion of the preceding weeks.

The doubts and fears of "*the heiress*" attached not to the professions of Craven; he was the presumptive heir to wealth and rank

rank far superior to her own; he even at present possessed a very considerable fortune, while, as the idol of fashionable popularity, a being formed to create love on its most elevated and enthusiastic scale, gifted with almost resistless powers of attraction, where he suffered the fine gifts of bounteous Nature to play unshackled by the chains of folly, he could have aspired to almost any alliance short of royalty, and scarcely have thought of the possibility of rejection.

His energetic character coalesced with that of Zitella in its natural state, ere a wretched mother's prudential warnings had chilled its fervour, by inculcating the premature germ of early suspicion; she believed his follies but the growth of circumstance, and that, once connected with a rational woman, to whom his heart and hand were mutually linked, her influence would soon dismiss those frivolous appendages, which obscured the intrinsic value of a brilliant understanding, and veiled that nobility of heart, that lofty

elevation of sentiment, and ardour of feeling, which certainly centered in the attractive Craven.

Convinced that she was viewed with indifference by Molesworth, and that even his esteem, if any he ever entertained, had received diminution, from the apparent narrowness of conduct in "*the heiress*" that morning; recollecting also the fatal promise given to a dying parent, that she would not suffer too fastidious theory to delay a matrimonial election, but, on the contrary, that she would early suffer *reason* to direct her choice of a partner, to protect her inexperienced course in the adventurous journey of life, our heroine sought to lead her thoughts to a man whom she believed individually loved her, and whom she imagined no sinister speculation could possibly influence.

But, alas! the heart was weak; it trembled beneath the prudential reasoning of the head; yet Zitella felt humiliated by yielding to its voice, in favour of an attachment unsanctioned by reciprocity; while,

while, on behalf of Craven, the united powers of nature and fortune maintained proof of that affection which induced his election of herself; gratitude, therefore, aided the cause, and, leagued with respect for his talents, and esteem for his virtues, they obtained such an ascendancy over her mind, as to produce the fruits of decision, and consequent determination of acting; she therefore ended the debate, by conviction of the necessity to carry her resolution into effect; for feeling, in fact, obligated to enter the pale of wedded life, she acknowledged, that the brilliancy of Craven's character was more calculated to attract her heart, had it never bowed to the fascinations of Clarence Molesworth, than the retiring unobtrusive merits of the esteemed Gerald Lister. She regretted his unhappy fate, with the generous tender feelings of her warm heart; but she could not conceal from herself, that he was not the man formed to receive the more animated affections of her bosom.

CHAP. XII.

But beauty, like the fair Hesperian tree,
Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard
Of dragon watch, with unenchanted eye,
To save her blossoms, or defend her fruit.

MILTON.

A Lover, and no Lover.

FRAUGHT with heroic resolution, our *rational* orphan entered the rooms where Lady Dorville this evening received her numerously invited guests, with all the inanity of marble beauty. Aware that Craven would form one of the visitants, she felt a shuddering conviction, that this evening might decide her future fate. It

was

was the anniversary of the third year, since the fatal promise had been registered in the presence of a dying parent; the recollection that it was so, stimulated her orphan to its fulfilment.

Craven had never appeared to equal advantage as this evening; fully estimating the real worth of the character of her whose good opinion he sought to secure, he cast aside each vestige of idle frivolity, and giving the reins to nature, appeared indeed himself, the entertaining, the instructive companion. Every moment our heroine became more reconciled to her election; reason hushed the palpitation of that heart which yet beat for Molesworth; and Zitella rested on the firm pillar of *content*, although the temple of *happiness* appeared not in the perspective of her life.

While engaged in listening to the now animated and intelligent Craven, the enlightened moralist, and the discriminating

observer, the attention of our orphan was suddenly diverted, not by a rival to the all-commanding Arthur, but the *entré* of one of her own sex.

A *petit* form, endowed with all the elegance, the soft harmony of beauty's outline, approached towards them, and appeared to have just arrived. Her complexion emulated that of winter's snow, yet divested of its coldness, for there was a warm tint which ran through the azure veins, and spoke the herald of almighty love! the voluptuary would have hailed her, even in loveliness supreme; yet her downcast eyes, her uncertain varying colour, awed the presumptuous gaze of the libertine, and almost taught him the homage of the heart; while, on the just parted lips, blooming in the roseate of youth and health, there was an expression of ardency, that gave an alluring claim to the kiss of love!

The attention of Zitella was excited by the

the stranger, and she pointed the object to the notice of Craven, with an enquiry if her name was known to him.

Lord Arthur turned to survey the individual to whom his view was thus directed; but in another moment a complete metamorphosis appeared accomplished—the stately figure of her lover shook, as if suddenly palsied; his eyes were distended beyond their usual limits, as they fixed upon the form of the female to whose observance they had been directed; his lips merely articulated—"Maria!" and every sense seemed centered in the name.

She approached still nearer, but had not yet apparently recognized his Lordship; he, however, seemed magnetized by the movement; crimson flushed his face, while the naturally strong muscles of his frame appeared suddenly relaxed, and a total nervous debility succeeded, as, starting from the side of Zitella, he rushed as precipitately out of the room as his agitation permitted.

The eyes of our orphan involuntarily pursued him, and as he disappeared, she sunk into a chair which stood near.

The dream of confidence was fled, and, with a deep sigh, she mentally murmured —"Must then the miseries of *doubt* never be banished from the bosom of *the heiress?*"

Alas! the ever-expressive features of Craven had revealed the empire of his "*Maria!*" the observation of the deceased Countess of Darnford now rested yet more deeply on memory—"*There are men who may seek in wedlock the mere fulfilment of a duty, in giving a lawful heir to hereditary possessions, or distinctions.*"

Zitella now recollected to have heard, that his Grace of Somerton had long forsworn a future matrimonial yoke, and that on Lord Arthur, and his offspring, was to rest the dukedom. Thus she once more traced a sinister motive, and affixed even to the addresses of the elevated Craven, which had never before occurred to her imagination. The pain of that moment was great;

great; now but too conscious, that no preference of the heart had awakened a jealous pang, Zitella reflected not the world might misinterpret the emotion, which she was sensible she had exhibited, into a devoted attachment for an inconstant lover.

Upon raising her eyes once more to surrounding objects, they encountered the full gaze of Clarence Molesworth, who had entered some minutes previous to the departure of Craven, although hitherto unseen by our heroine. He started, on perceiving he was observed, and, insensible at the moment of the necessity of even a recognizing bow, turned precipitately away, but not before the expression of complicated distress betrayed on his features, was deeply registered in the memory of her he loved; but Zitella was interrupted from its contemplation at the moment, by the approach of Lady Darnford, who, in her usual blunt unfeeling

unfeeling manner, exclaimed—"Jealous! absolutely jealous!"

"Under what form does the camelion at present appear to your Ladyship?" returned our heroine, with a forced smile.

"Under that of a love-lorn maid of England, rivalled by a married daughter of Hibernia!"

"Love must consequently, I presume, be then the ground on which the unruly steed exhibits his gambols, and when reason guides not the reins, error will become the substitute. But while we converse thus metaphorically, I am in total ignorance to what your Ladyship may more particularly allude; or, in fact, whether you have any allusion at all."

"I hate the affectation of ignorance," rejoined the unceremonious Countess, "more than even the radical misfortune itself; therefore, my good girl, cease

"————These pretty baby tears,
These flut'rings, faintings, and these jealous fears."

Take

Take a lesson of experience with a good grace, and bury the hydra-headed monster in the grave of love, while the senseless marble shall alone mark the tomb of the inconstant *Craven.*"

"The application is now, indeed, too direct to be evaded," replied Zitella; "but your Ladyship is mistaken, both in the one and in the other; Lord Arthur Craven has not been, is not, nor ever will be, to me more than the friend."

"Do not trouble yourself to explain," returned the Dowager, coldly; "from time immemorial, every female, when jealous of a lover, affects to be indifferent;" and with an air of provoking disbelief in the avowal, and perfect satisfaction in having effected the invariable wish to annoy, the phlegmatic torment passed on.

She had scarcely done so, when Mrs. Nugent advanced—"Are you near ready, my dear Zitella?"

"Perfectly so," was the reply.

"I am

"I am glad to hear you say so," she resumed; "for I have had quite enough of this; and now we'll have a frisk at Lady Ann's."

"And, pray, who is Lady Ann?" exclaimed our heroine; "I do not recollect any other engagement for to-night; and I am even at a loss to know whom you mean."

"Gemini, dear!" interrupted Mrs. Nugent, "you say true; for, now I remember, I never told you, that, two days before you came from Heath House, her Ladyship left a card for you, as well as for me—for she is an old acquaintance of Hubby; and so, when I returned the visit, I thought I could manage it very well for you; and so I told Lady Ann, that you were only gone a little way off, and that you would call presently; and when I went down, I told the porter, that, as soon as his lady was gone out, he must go quietly up stairs, and put that card down upon the table, and not say a word further about

about it; and so, the day after that, comes a card, to say Lady Ann received company this evening; and so, as I know Hubby is there, I choose to go, and I suppose you will go with me?"

Our already annoyed heroine felt alike bewildered by the manœuvring of her companion, and very unwilling to retire any where, save home; she therefore endeavoured to prevail for that end; but Fanny for once proved obstinate, and concluded by observing—"Well, I am sure there must be some reason why you won't go; and if you would but tell the truth—I know it is only because Lord Arthur Craven is not going, I suppose—don't you think, Mr. Molesworth," she added, addressing him, as he was just passing them, "don't you think that the murder is now out?"

"Pardon me," he replied, "but I am wholly at a loss to know to what you would direct my attention, not having been

been so fortunate as to have heard any thing that had passed previously."

"It is not material; indeed it was a matter of no consequence; Mrs. Nugent only expressed a wish——"

"But what signifies my wish," interrupted the tormenting Fanny; "when you are unwilling——"

"No, no; I am quite ready to attend; you mistake."

"Now that is comical; how could I mistake? for you told me in plain English, you did not like to go; and I know it is only because your sweetheart and you have had a tiff; for I saw, when Lord Arthur went out of the room, that his face turned as red as a carrot, and you looked odd and queer, and, to my thinking, as if you were going to cry—but come, if you'll go, I won't reap up old sores."

The feelings of Zitella were now roused to their highest pitch, and she felt an almost irrepressible inclination to have verified,

as

as far as rested with her, the correctness of Mrs. Nugent's prediction; certain it is, that the war of contending causes had almost operated that effect, and she now struggled to suppress those tears which actually rushed to her eyes.

Molesworth was silent, and she dared not risk the expression of her countenance at this trying moment; rising, therefore, from her seat, she placed her own arm within that of Mrs. Nugent, and mechanically walked out of the room.

As she descended the stairs, every other feeling gave way to mortification, and she sincerely wished herself again an inhabitant of Heath House, or any other, rather than be thus for ever subjected to the vulgarisms of Mrs. Nugent, whom, on her part, unconscious of the pain she had inflicted, continued without ceasing to detail all that had occurred, until the carriage stopt at the door of Lady Ann Leigh.

Careless of whatever now might happen, Lady Zitella once more entered a crowded assembly

assembly with her uncle's wife, when, to her infinite astonishment, the first form on which her eyes rested was that of Lord Arthur Craven, hanging over the chair of Mr. Nugent, who was seated at a card-table, and whose agitated countenance was at once accounted for, by an observation she heard from the lips of a stranger, who exclaimed—"That is the third large bet he has lost; if he amuse himself often thus, the rupees must be supplied, not from the coffers of an English nabob, but that of *Arcot* himself."

"And who is the successful adventurer?" was the interrogation of his companion.

"Lord Arthur Craven, the only brother of the Duke of Somerton; but he does not seem much interested in the matter, if we may judge from his countenance; yet the smiles of fortune are at this moment lavishly bestowed upon his Lordship, for he is also said to be the affianced husband of the Darnford heiress. He is a fine liberal fellow; and, I dare say, will be more

more prudent than poor Horton, who marred his matrimonial schemes by a silly wager, and now tells it himself, to ward off the joke levelled by others."

The arm of the speaker was touched by his companion, as if to warn him of the hitherto unnoticed vicinity of the lady of whom he spoke; and their both moving off in consequence of the discovery, revealed her figure to the view of Craven, at the moment when Mrs. Nugent had quitted her arm to address her husband.

Lord Arthur had retired from Lady Dorville's to his own house; for, actuated by nought save the impulse of flying from the too dangerous Maria, her sudden sight had deranged the heroism of months of painful absence, and he was compelled to acknowledge, that in her presence, love reigned with that despotism which was calculated to alarm the voice of honour. But he bore with him in flight the fatal image of Maria; it clung around his soul; no power could wrest him

him from the fatal grasp; and now, to elude reflection, he as suddenly rushed to the orgies of the gaming-table; but the natural inclinations of his heart rested not on this destructive passion; he sought in vain to force an interest, by lavishly extended bets; they produced no effect; and in the crowded assembly of Lady Ann Leigh, he felt that Maria yet reigned as triumphant as in the solitude of his chamber.

At the moment when he most severely felt this truism, the form of Lady Zitella Herbert burst upon his view. He retreated from the card-table, approached, and respectfully took her hand, as he exclaimed—"Heavens! your Ladyship at this house—the house of Lady Ann Leigh!"

"And why not, my Lord?"

"Pardon me, Lady Zitella; but, as a friend, may I venture an opinion? may I venture even to advise?"

"The voice of friendship, my Lord, will,

will, I trust, be ever grateful to my ear; and be assured, that I shall never be regardless of admonition thus impressed."

"Then, most esteemed and regarded of women, suffer me, thus sanctioned, to guard you from intimacy with the lady of this mansion; cultivate not her acquaintance; she is unworthy of the notice of Lady Zitella Herbert—it were perhaps better, even if she were unknown to her."

"I thank your Lordship most sincerely for the information," said Zitella, in a grave tone; "but I was brought hither against my inclinations. Mrs. Nugent—" she hesitated, for she acknowledged the indelicacy of condemning the wife of her uncle, whose very roof at this moment protected her.

"I understand you," said Craven, on perceiving the embarrassed pause; "believe me, I enter into your situation; I feel—yes, Zitella, I feel for you more than a common interest—you have awakened the warm admiration of my heart!"

"Cease,

"Cease, my Lord," cried our orphan, with haughty frigidity; "I prefer the language of *sincerity* to that of mere complimentary gallantry; the counsels of a friend I would seek to cherish, but the flattery of unqualified admiration gratifies me not."

"Believe me, Lady Zitella, that although circumstance has given birth to those fears which prompt the declaration, that I sincerely admire those very perfections from which, perhaps, I have most to dread; for, even at the moment, while the warm affections of the heart are excited, the deliberate counsels of the head preponderate, and you will act rather under the influence of the latter, than the decision of the former."

"The head, my Lord, is all that is called upon in the present instance."

"No, Lady Zitella, I would call upon your heart; I would affect that, if within the compass of my ability; yet dissimulation is foreign to my soul: I will be explicit,

explicit, open as your own generous nature could approve; grant me but an hour's private audience to-morrow, and till then—yes, most admired, most respected of women, till then suspend your judgment on the unfortunate Craven, for I will on your fiat rest my fate; I will—"

"What a pack of nonsense!" interrupted Mrs. Nugent, suddenly rejoining them; "gemini! why, any one could see with half an eye that you have had a squabble; for I never saw two people look more grumpy in my life—Lord love ye, shake hands, and be friends, for I do hate to see folks quizzical like; for no sooner did you go away, my Lord, than Zitella had her eyes full of tears; for every body said so, and I saw it myself."

The petrified orphan commenced to contradict this indelicate remark, but the words died upon her lips; for, in fact, she scarcely knew how to parry the truth of this observation, which, she was assured,

Mrs. Nugent would neither relinquish, nor suffer her to impute to any other source.

The eyes of Craven rested on her blushing cheeks, with the full impression of the verity of Mrs. Nugent's painful insinuation; but as he, the next moment, delicately sought to relieve the confusion of our heroine, his reply was arrested by the address of Neville, who had also just repaired to Lady Ann Leigh's from the Dorville party.

"You have been most unfortunate, Lord Arthur; your friend Stavenant has been seeking you with indefatigable perseverance, amid the crush of Lady Dorville's winter exhibition of this evening; for I told him I had seen you there not five minutes before his arrival; but you must have left it almost immediately after, since his search was vain."

"I did not see him," said Craven, as he suddenly dropt the hand of Zitella.

"I supposed not, of course," replied the

the former, as I believe you were never yet, my Lord, accused of distancing or forgetting an old friend; but what is a little singular, I do not recollect ever having heard your Lordship speak of the fair Maria; surely *elle est la beauté méme!* she is just the very female I should suppose would have rivetted your attention; but as you have literally passed her by, I presume she does not accord with your idea of female perfection?"

"Can she do otherwise?" exclaimed Craven, with unguarded quickness; then, suddenly correcting himself, with a sigh, irrepressible from effort, he added, "for she is worthy of the preference of my exalted friend."

He turned away as he spoke, arrested by a voice from the card-table, in an under tone—"Again, my Lord, you are conqueror; shall we say *double, or quits?*"

"Even so," he replied, with an evidently distracted mind; "even so, *double, or quits.*"

Neville now addressed our heroine; but she was absent, and, in defiance of every endeavour, abstracted; with pain she beheld the effects of an agitated mind, upon a man whose heart appeared the seat of many virtues, and, absorbed in contemplation, she paid but little attention to the common-place observations of Neville, her present companion. She was, however, suddenly aroused from this state, by a violent exclamation from her uncle, as he started from his seat—"I will play no more! I am deeply involved, and cannot now adjust the demands upon my honour. To-morrow morning I will be at the Cocoa-tree by twelve o'clock; do me the favour to attend the rendezvous."

Our orphan was inexpressibly shocked at his manner, which was wild, distracted; but this was somewhat encreased, as, in turning round, he discovered her vicinity.

"Lady Zitella Herbert here!" he exclaimed, in accents of astonishment; "by what means do I find you at my side?"

"Simply,"

"Simply," she replied, in timid accents, "to accompany Mrs. Nugent."

"Where is she?" he fiercely ejaculated.

"Here, lovey," issued from the dimpled mouth of Fanny.

"The carriage waits," he continued, in a manner very unlike his accustomed one; "make your adieus to Lady Ann, and accompany me home."

"Lord be good unto me!" she returned, "I never saw you so frumpish before; what is the matter?"

"It signifies not," he added; "pray do not enquire."

Fanny, half frightened, leaned on the arm of our orphan, as she made her parting curtsey, and was handed to the carriage by Nugent.

A silence of some minutes prevailed, which was broken by the latter, as if soliloquising—"This mental torture is not to be endured; I have been ever the slave of impulse, and am now its victim; why did I suffer one sense to mislead me, when all

all the others combined to oppose its influence? but I merit, I deserve it all, and the issue is at hand."

"What's the matter, dear?" cried poor Fanny, bursting into tears; "I don't know what ails you; but I suppose you are angry I did not tell I was going to Lady Ann's to-night; but I thought I was to call upon every body who called upon me; and if I did wrong, I am sure I am sorry for it; but, indeed, if you frighten me so, I shall not love you so well; for you may say what you will, but you certainly don't speak so comfortable to me as you used to do."

Nugent was subdued—"My poor girl, do not distress us both; I have flown to a detested vice, to smother the voice of self-reproach; but you do not understand me; and it is better, perhaps, that it is so."

It was evident that she felt the dereliction of former fondness; but the mind of Zitella was deeply wounded; a truth now flashed upon her, which had never before entered

entered her imagination; she saw the gulf upon whose precipice stood her misjudging relative; and no sooner had they descended from the carriage, than, in a whisper, she begged half an hour's conference in the morning; this being acceded to, they separated, Zitella retiring to her own room, with new and painful sensations.

Sleep fled her eye-lids, and she arose at an early hour, to prepare her mind for the appointed interview.

END OF VOL. III.

Lane, Darling, and Co. Leadenhall-Street.

WORKS

Printed at the Minerva-Press,

With the Reviewers' Opinion.

THE ENGLISH-WOMAN,

A NOVEL,

BY MISS BYRON,

5 vols. £1 5s.

"This Novel is far superior to the general run of such productions. The language is animated and correct; the characters are happily diversified, and delineated with skill; and although the story is spun out to the extent of five volumes, the attention is never tired by unnecessary circumlocution, or impertinent digression. The scenes depictured evince that the fair Authoress is no stranger to high life, nor an unprofitable observer of its predominating follies. On the whole, we can safely venture to recommend the English-Woman as a novel from the perusal of which the reader may derive both amusement and instruction."

Lady's Monthly Museum, December 1808.

SIR OWEN GLENDOWR,

AND OTHER TALES.

BY ANTHONY FREDERICK HOLSTEIN.

3 vols. 12mo. 13s. 6d.

Dr. Johnson observed, that the invention of a story was no inconsiderable effort of the human mind;—and if this remark be true, some applause must be due to the author of these tales, which are all different from each other in their plot, and of which each displays marks of originality. That of 'the Orphan Heiress' is new and singular; 'Egbert' is interesting, as well as eccentric; and, on the whole, we venture, from these specimens augur favourably of the author's future productions.

Monthly Review, Sep. 1809.

This book is given special protection for the reason indicated below:

Autograph	Giftbook
Association	Illustration
Condition	Miniature book
Cost	Original binding or covers
Edition	Presentation
Fine binding	Scarcity
Format	Subject

L82—5M—1-52—49125